

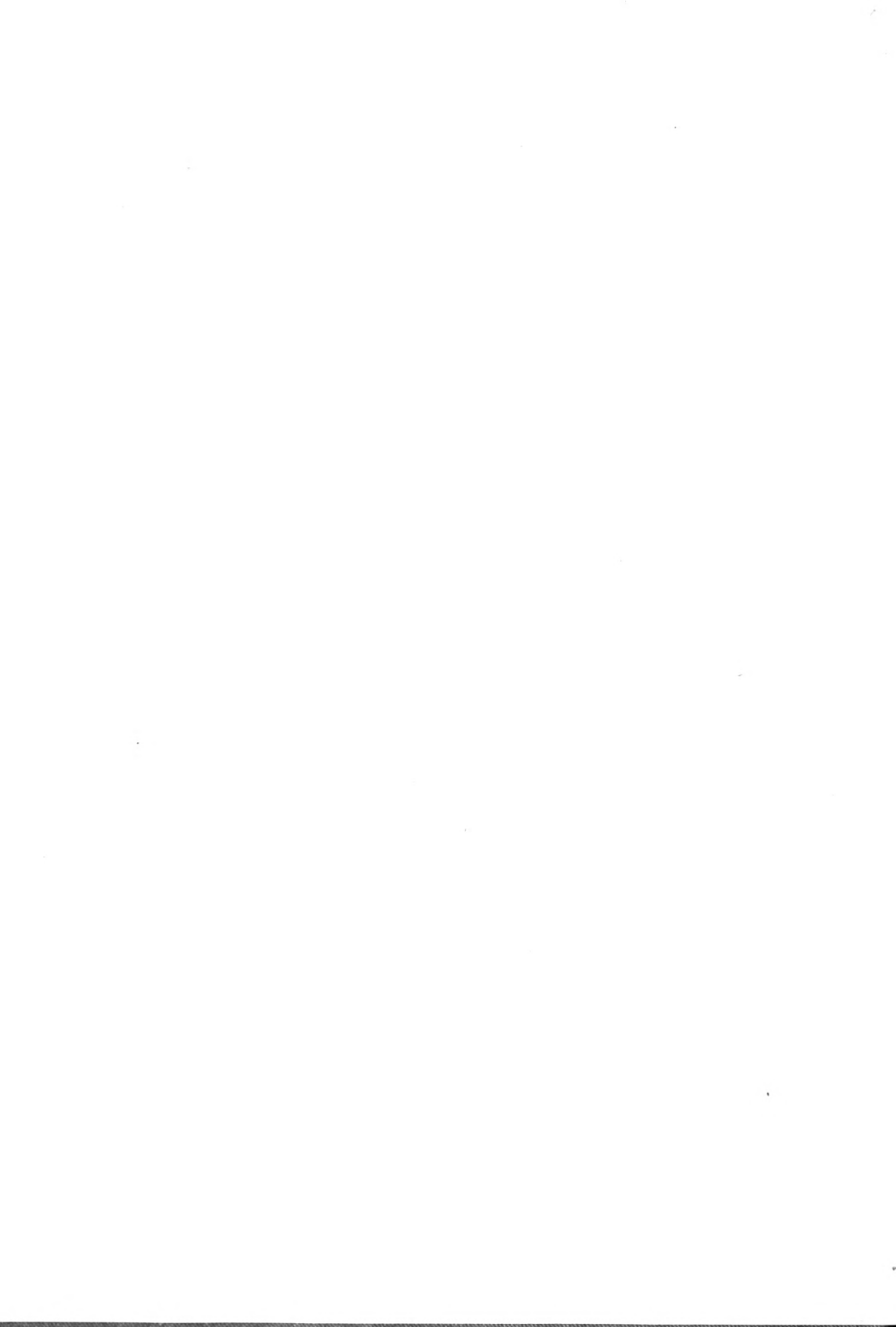
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"HIGH JOE"

J. BURRITT SMITH







“HIGH JOE;”

OR THE LOGGER'S STORY.

...BY...

J. BURRITT SMITH.

People never go right until they have tried all possible ways of going wrong.—HERBERT SPENCER.

The Busy World Publishing Co.,

PUBLISHERS,

MADISON, WISCONSIN.

PRICE IN PAPER, 50 CENTS; CLOTH, \$1 00.

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By J. BURRITT SMITH.

DEDICATION.

To the "boys" in the woods, the mills, the workshops, the mines and the factories, constituting together the grand army of toilers who make possible comfort, wealth, progress and a better civilization, but who are today the prey of high-handed robbery and avarice, often under legal sanction, this unpretending volume is dedicated. The hope of its author is that it may arouse the careless, awaken the sleepers and enlist a general sympathy between all classes, to the end that a spirit of brotherhood may cement all hearts and lives, purposes and laws in a national, fraternal bond stronger than any or all forms of oppression, and make ours truly "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

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PREFACE.

IN offering the following story to the public, the author wishes to make a few words of explanation as to its origin and purpose:

In the early winter of 1891-2, some of our friends planned to send a prohibition paper to the many logging camps in the northern part of the state. It occurred to the writer, that perhaps more attention might be secured for the paper, were it to contain a story that would interest the "boys" in the woods. The title and a brief outline came to the author, and he wrote the first chapter and offered it for publication. It was gladly accepted, but in a few weeks the plan failed for lack of funds. The story, however, was continued, and words of commendation with requests that it be put in pamphlet form, began to come, as the story grew. Constant requests and inquiries for "High Joe" since its completion, have led to its present publication.

As to its form and general trend, a word may not be amiss. Only one purpose influenced its production—the presentation in a rugged and vivid way of the terrible evils of the nation's legalized drink-traffic, and the criminal complicity of good men in sanctioning it.

"High Joe" is emphatically a story of "midnight vigils", nearly every chapter having been written between seven and one o'clock at night, as it was needed for publication, and when the writer was tired and exhausted by incessant labors and a multitude of cares. It was set up from the pencil original, with only the few corrections that the press of other

work allowed. In this latter work he was greatly assisted by his wife, who, in all of his writing, is an ever present "help-meet."

In republishing the story, other work and limited time have made possible only slight revision or change.

Scarcely an incident is related that a similar one in actual life has not been known or clipped from the daily press. Could we have done so, and be true to our purpose to paint, as far as possible, a true picture, we would gladly have omitted the unpleasant scenes and sorrowful events.

Should any one think we strike the indifferent professor or the careless church too hard, we can only say that we esteem Christ's church above all earthly organizations, and believe that the Gospel is the power of God to the conversion of the license-voter, no less than the licensed-seller or the liquor-drinker. We have not overlooked the fact that many churches, ministers and members are giving heroic battle to the rum host, nor that the greatest strength of the movement for its overthrow is the love begotten in consecrated hearts by the spirit of the Master.

These rather lengthy explanations have been deemed necessary, lest some one through haste, misconception of the author's motives, or aroused prejudice may be induced to close the following pages and give their sorrowful truths no consideration.

Prayerfully and lovingly we submit "High Joe" to the hearts of all earnest readers, hoping that when its pages are perused, each will be prepared the better to answer the momentous question, in the fight with this great evil: "What shall *I* do?"

MADISON, WIS., June 1, 1893.

THE AUTHOR.

PROLOGUE.

THE LICENSE SACRIFICE.

A mother sits weeping in sorrow and shame;
Her heartstrings are bleeding, her love all aflame;
While the cry from her heart for her long erring boy
Is, "Where, oh where! is my darling, my Roy?"

"My boy," she cries, "with his laughing blue eye,
"And the smile that he gave me whene'er he passed by;
"His light, joyous step, his ringing ha! ha!
"His call, as he entered; 'where, where is mamma?"

"I rocked his wee cradle and wheeled his small cart,
"That carried my treasure, the joy of my heart;
"Then taught his small feet the way they should run,
"And laughed at his rollicking, innocent fun.

"I sang with my bonnie, and heard his sweet prayer;
"Then asked the dear Father to lead him with care,
"While up toward the stature of manhood he grew,
"The boy of my heart, so honest and true.

"In schoolroom, on playground, at home, on the street.
"Wherever he'd go, whoever he'd meet,
"The same pleasant smile and light, cheery word,
"Earned rightly for Roy, the nickname of 'Bird.'

"He grew to full manhood, tall, stately and true,
"With smile still as sweet and eye just as blue,
"Then out in the world he went from our hearts.
"To the battle of life in the world's busy marts.

"He went, but he came not; oh, now can I tell,
"Of his fall from our heaven to the world's deepest hell!
"Down, down from the teachings of mother and home,
"To the vileness and sin of a licensed saloon

"He went away to the wild, throbbing west,
 "And entered its life with his young manhood's zest;
 "He breathed the free air, but a poison it bore
 "From the depths of many a high licensed door.

"He breathed of that poison, then entered the door,
 "Where virtue once entered, is virtue no more;
 "And, all of his passions aflame to destroy,
 "Went down like a wreck, my once noble boy.

"He sleeps in a valley where gay western flowers
 "Grow thick o'er his grave, fed by wild mountain showers;
 "While the mother that bore him, now robbed of all joy,
 "Sits comfortless, mourning the death of her boy.

"Oh! why did they dig such pits for his fall?
 "And why did they send to the East such a call?
 "Were there not enough boys in all the broad West,
 "Without sending and taking my brightest and best?

"Did they need for the building of city and street,
 "More lives than they had, more innocent feet?
 "So laid broad their nets, then sent for my boy,
 "Only to lure, to entrap and destroy?

"Must they build broad their cities and high college spires
 "By licensing sin's most unquenchable fires?
 "Will they never cease sacrifice, never be done
 "The selling our boys to the demon of Rum?

"O God, reach down, and save other boys!
 "Rob not other hearts, like mine, of their joys!
 "Waken men; rescue manhood; drive Rum from all lands;
 "Oh! spare mother hearts by Omnipotent hands.

"*God waken the church and waken the state!*
Awaken our people, the rich and the great!
Hurl thunderbolts down, if needed, to stay
"This traffic in blood. GOD HASTEN, I PRAY!"

J. B. SMITH.

March, 1853.

HIGH JOE;

OR,

THE LOGGER'S STORY.

CHAPTER I.

TURKEY DINNER.

The winter had set in, and a heavy freeze and good snow made it possible for the loggers to get into camp and begin the long winter's work, nearly a month ahead of the usual time.

In the "Carson Camp" the men had been at work for two months, and the great piles of logs upon the skidways, stretching along the bank of the river for half a mile, told of the hard work that had already been done by a body of fifty sturdy choppers with teamsters, scalers, cooks and tote-men.

When the crew arrived at the camps, late in October, fifty miles from any city, and in a wilderness of pine swamp, there were many who felt lonesome and dreaded the long, solitary winter so far from home, news and civilization. This feeling was not improved by finding already there as foreman, the man from whom the camp took its name, and that he was a cold,

heartless taskmaster, bound to do the best he could for his employer without regard for the feelings or comfort of the men.

Most of the choppers had been together for several winters; but among the few new men was a giant-like fellow, whose pleasant face and broad forehead rose six feet and four inches above his moccasins. Though a stranger, all had come to look upon "High Joe," as they dubbed him, not only as a friend but the leader in all plans, except those of the foreman.

"New Year's" morning dawned dark, promising snow before night, but as usual, the foreman called all hands at half-past four that they might be out and ready for work as soon as any light appeared.

"I am not going to work to-day," called High Joe, loud enough to be heard by all the camp. "We have worked two months, fourteen hours a day, and a holiday will do us good and be no loss to the company."

With this he rolled over on his bunk and was soon sleeping again. His example was followed by the others, who knew Joe expected it, and when the foreman came in, half an hour later, he began swearing and cursing more than usual, and threatening all with discharge if they were not up at once.

"I say, boss," called out Joe, "we are going to have a holiday and don't want to be disturbed any more."

There was something about his voice that told the foreman it would be best to regard the brawny giant's words, and he went out muttering.

At a late hour the crew rolled from their bunks, feeling several years younger for this unusual sleep,

and in good spirits to enjoy the day. The cook served a hasty breakfast, promising to make up for it by turkey for dinner; and all began wondering how such an article found its way so far from civilization, especially into the Carson Camp.

High Joe said nothing, but examined ten fat turkeys with evident pleasure. To some of the inquisitive, however, the cook volunteered the information, that the "high flyers" had come in with a tote-team the night before, and he believed High Joe had something to do with it.

The foreman left before breakfast, saying he would see who was boss, and drove rapidly toward the company's chief camp, twenty miles away.

Just before dinner the head partner in the Logging Company came in by another road, and, as he saw the men in camp, inquired the reason. Joe explained, and invited the "Colonel" down to see the work they had done.

"All right, boys," he said on returning. "I think you are entitled to a holiday. No other camp has done as well."

The Colonel was invited to sit next to High Joe at dinner—the latter acting as host—and was not a little surprised at being asked which part of the turkey he preferred.

"I'll have to inquire," said he good humoredly, "how ten fat turkeys wandered this way, or who pays for them?"

"We'll find some one who can explain, if necessary," said Joe, offering him a well-loaded plate. "There's no bill against the company."

When the dinner was finished and cleared away, a conference of the men was called and the Colonel invited to be present. The story of the unkindness of the foreman and his disregard of all, was quickly told, and a general request presented for his removal and High Joe's appointment. Before night, after conferring with the teamsters and others, the request was granted, causing great rejoicing.

Just before dusk, Carson drove in, and was told of the change by the Colonel.

"It's no use; men are men, and deserve to be treated like men," was his reply when the former tried to make excuses. "This High Joe is evidently the man for the place. You can stay or go, as you please."

"I'll go," was Carson's answer, "but I suppose I'll have to wait till morning. You'll see your mistake in three months."

As darkness settled over the forest, the wind sighed through the trees, and great flakes of snow fell thick and fast.

"There's a heavy storm brewing," said the Colonel, "and I fear I won't be able to get home to-morrow."

"Never mind," said High Joe; "we'll make room for you here. We want you to join us in the dining-room and enjoy our New Year's exercises."

A half hour later, the long, log dining-room was lighted by all the teamsters' lanterns, cleaned as bright as rubbing could make them, and the large stove in the center added to the good-cheer by its red-hot sides. The tables were pushed against the wall and all the chairs and benches in the camp were

arranged around the stove, so as to accommodate the sixty men, who found places, evidently expecting something but not knowing what. A few moments later, High Joe walked in with a barrel on his shoulder; and, setting it down, knocked the head out in a twinkling, revealing as fine a lot of red apples as one often sees. With, "help yourselves, boys," he went out, only to return again with two pails full of mixed nuts, which he proceeded to turn into pans and basins, and pass around. When all were well supplied with apples and nuts, none knowing how they got there, Joe said:

"Now Colonel, our only charge can be paid by a story. We want half a dozen, long or short, and you are the man to lead off. When all the rest have done, I'll tell how the turkeys, et cetera, came here, and give you, to close with, my story. Go ahead, Colonel."

CHAPTER II.

THE LOGGER'S STORY OPENS.

The Colonel began, and, as the apples and nuts disappeared down the throats of sixty interested listeners, told of his boyhood in Wisconsin, where, in the logging camps of the early "sixties," he learned the practical knowledge that enabled him later to become a successful and rich lumberman, who yet had no greater pleasure than the four or five months of rude life each winter in the logging camps with his men.

One after another the stories were told, till High Joe's turn came, when all sat back in evident expectation of getting the best of the feast. No one knew just who he was, where he came from, or anything of his past life. With a modesty that fittingly accompanied his "big," unselfish heart, he had never boasted of great deeds, nor told what such a giant might have accomplished. Joe was a worker not a talker, and no man could equal his steady, unerring swing of the ax, or the number of trees that fell before his relentless chop, chop, all day.

All loneliness had disappeared, and the days were gliding by almost unheeded. As the more thoughtful ones now looked back, they realized how different life had been thus far in the Carson camp, from former winters. A few books, papers and magazines had

regularly found their way thither, and Joe was always the first to digest them. With a remark about this article or that book, he had kept the camp alive with discussion and study, till books were well thumbed and papers and magazines literally worn out. The various packs of cards that had found a place in most of the choppers' outfits, had received little wear, evidently failing to amuse as in other days. At first, the foreman planned for work on Sunday, but Joe "set his foot on it" by saying, "I can do more chopping in six than in seven days, and I am here to do my best;" and soon, by general consent, all followed his example. With the same tact, he then made the day so enjoyable that all looked toward it with the brightest anticipations of the week.

Thus he had become a power, shaping everything for the happiness and good of others, the New Year's dinner being the result of this thoughtfulness. He began by saying:

"Those turkeys and apples were *good*, weren't they, boys?"

"You bet!" was the general response.

"Best day I ever spent in camp," said a lank Mainite.

"Begorra, I niver ate sich a dinner," laughed Pat Kinney.

"Zee cook and zee hoste am like zee Frenchman," grinned a little Canadian from Montreal.

"How did you get them all, Joe?" asked the Colonel.

"I wrote a friend of mine in C.," was the reply, "telling her about our camp, how we enjoyed the

books and papers she had sent, and wished all who had remembered us, a merry Christmas and a general good time eating Turkey. I closed by saying we would have bread, pork and beans for breakfast, pork, beans and bread for dinner, and beans, bread and pork for supper. She took the hint, as I hoped she would, and wrote me what she would send. I expected the things for Christmas, but they were switched off and only came last night. So you see whom we have to thank. 'Tis one of those unions of good women who remember everybody's boys whether young or old. They work to help the fellows in the city, the woods, the mines and everywhere. You'll know how I came to know and think so much of them, when you hear my story. I am not proud of the past boys, but will tell it that no one here may suffer what I have."

Leaning his chair back against the wall, while the blood coursed over his face and brow as though driven by heavy heart-throbs, and a deep but distant fire burned in his eyes, High Joe began his story:

"I was born in New York, where my father was a prosperous business man in a small city on the Erie Canal. He left my training to my mother, a woman of strong character and lovable disposition, the friend of all who knew her. She was scrupulous in the neatness and order of the whole house, and, being a college graduate with literary qualities well developed, spent all time not required for household cares and social calls, with her favorite books and authors. The one annoying thing in the house was her restless, noisy, growing boy. There was no place for him in

which to develop his many-sided nature. The woodshed was too full for a work-shop and the kitchen too nicely scoured and polished for whittling or any boyish muss. The yard was so nicely sodded that no one could run or play ball there. Father found time after tea to sprinkle the lawn for half an hour and admonish me with, 'Now Joey, remember and keep off the grass; we want our lawn to look as well as the others.'

I rapidly became acquainted with 'the fellows,' good and bad, and came early to know all of the mysterious things of life which they had learned. My father inquired often after my school work, but had no thought for my street education, although he gave almost daily attention to the feeding and care of several Jersey calves he had imported. Though my mother loved me and seldom missed tucking me in bed and hearing my prayers at night, the oft-repeated admonitions of the day as I rushed in to ask some question or favor, were, 'Now Joey, I wish you would sit down and be quiet;' or, 'Do go and play outdoors; there is no place for boy's noise in the house.' I soon carried secrets which I feared to tell my mother, and, as for my father, I would sooner have thought of telling them to strangers.

I can't tell you half of the events of those days. I was everywhere and in everything; and, as my mother learned of my pranks, came to dread interviews with her alone, knowing the censure and reproach I would receive.

At eighteen, I was *prepared* for college. I had made excellent progress in both school and street

education, till I was known as a thorough graduate in each, though, as a reckless youth, I can look back and see that I had no desire for mean things, but was simply a wild, almost untamed, colt. Thus I entered college ready for any kind of escapade or high-time.

Before the end of my course, I became a lover and drinker of wine and champagne, my connection with secret fraternities having a more demoralizing influence than the few saloons in the city. I lost my place in my class and with difficulty succeeded in graduating.

"My parents were grieved to learn, what they should have known all of the time with proper care, and I went home, reckless and dissatisfied with everything.

During my younger days, I had learned almost to worship a girl companion living near, gladly foregoing any 'lark' with the boys, for her company. About the time I went to college, her parents moved to the West, and I had not seen Alice Wightman for over five years.

My father offered me a place in his business, but I said I would wait; I wanted to see the West. Accordingly, I set out for C., in Wisconsin, whence I learned the Wightmans had gone. With little difficulty, I found my old friends, but the girl of former days had grown to a beautiful woman whom, if I had once worshipped, I now at once loved. The cordial reception I received was little less than a son might expect, and I felt that the East had few charms for me.

On my way out, I made the acquaintance of a young

man just returning from college, and learned he resided at C. and knew my friends.

The day after arriving there, he called and offered to show me around the city. We had not gone far when we passed a beautiful building. I stopped to look at it, and discovered a beer sign with the words, "The Palace."

"Let's go in and have a glass," said my companion. "It's the finest saloon in the city."

I consented, and there met several wealthy young men. The room was richly furnished, with pictures on the wall that stirred all of the evil in a young man. I never had seen such a place in the East and was captivated. After a half hour in that gilded hell, we started on with the passions of my whole being on fire. On inquiring how many such places the city licensed, I was told there were over a hundred, paying a large revenue. We found them everywhere, and my old appetite clamored for drink. One after another was visited, but the vile stuff in no way quenched my thirst.

At last I realized it was night, and, with half a dozen young men, was in "The Palace," drinking, gambling, and singing bacchanalian songs. The hours went by, while we sold our manhood at that licensed bar, growing wilder and drunker. A policeman waited near, whose duty it was, I afterward learned, to see that all of the rich, young fools who frequented this place, got safely home. Had we been strangers, we would have gone to the lockup: but a hack was called and one after another was driven

away. When it came my turn, the policeman helped me to my feet and asked where I wanted to go.

"Go? You bet, pard; hic—I guess I'll go to father Wi—Wightman's," I managed to stammer. "I'm—hic—goin' to marry—hic—Miss—Miss—say pard, ju know her?"

"All right," said my escort, "but she's too good for you. Come along;" and we were soon driving toward home.

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CHAPTER III.

OUR MANUFACTORIES.

"I will now tell you the story," continued High Joe, after a slight pause, "not as I saw it, but largely as related to me by others:"

When the carriage reached the Wightman residence, the policeman was unable to arouse his drunken charge. Limp and unconscious, he lay between the seats, the legitimate product of "man's inhumanity to man," which in all of the world's history never made countless thousands mourn so long, so deep, so hopelessly, as through licensed rum. A light burned brightly in the house and the officer started up the walk. Before he reached the door, it opened and a man stepped out.

"Goot efening, Meester Viteman;" said the former in a low voice. Then stepping nearer, as the light from the window revealed his star, he continued: "I haf got von young mahn in the hack vich cannot help hisself."

"Got what, did you say?" exclaimed the surprised man. "Who have you in the carriage? What's the matter?"

"Now doon't got oxcited, Meester Viteman, an schpake so lout as to vake de vimmen. It is only von young mahn vaht ish purtty drunks. I axt 'im var he vas schtopping, and he saze at 'fadder Viteman's'. I neffer knowd nottings dat you haf got von poy, Meester Viteman. Vaht schall ve do mit him?"

Without a word, Mr. Wightman hastened down the walk, followed by the officer who lighted a match and held it over the other's head, as he stood in the carriage door.

"Can it be possible?" said the former, as though a knife were entering his side. "Yes, its Joseph Strong. Oh, what a fall! How did it happen Mr. Kreppel? Tell me all you know."

"I knows nottings, Meester Viteman, only dot he haf been trinkin und trinkin mit der poys all night in der Palace, an I haf helpt von haaf doozen to der homes. Day haf schpent so mooch muny to-night ash I haf ernt for der next six moonts ahlreddy."

"I guess we'll have to drive him down to a motel, Mr. Kreppell. He isn't fit to go into any decent bed. I'll go with you as soon as I can get my coat."

"Dot ish so, Meester Viteman. I vil vate mit you."

With a hasty step the merchant entered his cheerful sitting room, and drawing on his coat, stepped to the table to turn down the light. As he leaned over his vacant chair, his eye caught the scripture which he had read in his family devotions a few hours before, and lingered long enough to read the words: "And a certain Samaritan as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him and bound up his wounds." Oft he had read that wonderful parable, but never had its meaning come to him as now, when, with the lightning's speed, the whole great truth grew to a mighty, mastering conviction. Before he reached the street, his duty was most clear; and, with a loyalty that marked him in his daily life, he acted promptly, by saying:

"I have concluded to take him into my own house, Mr. Kreppel. He isn't my boy, but I'll do just as well by him as though he were."

"Dot isch goot, Meester Viteman. Come, Yacobi, und help us."

A few moments later, with the help of the driver, they carried the poor wreck up the velvet carpeted stairs to one of the best rooms in the house. Turning down the spread of a large, easy bed, Mr. Wightman said, "We'll lay him here."

When everything was done, he dismissed the two, with:

"I wish you would call at Doctor Bronson's and ask him to come here at once. Please say nothing about this affair, Mr. Kreppel."

"No, Meester Viteman. I vill say nottings. I vos sorrow vor you, but dot ish vot der lischence isch vor; eh, Meester Viteman? Of der poys all schtade to home mit der mutter and sewester, der poor schleonkepper an his vamilly voot schtarve. Goot nacht, mine frent."

Fortunately the wife and daughter, after waiting with the father till nearly midnight, had retired and dropped into a sound sleep, from which the slight noise had not aroused them. Hence, when left alone, this man who had known what it is to love an only child, was given an opportunity to think.—in fact, was forced to think.—along a line which, in the past, he had studiously shunned.

Sitting down by the drunken sleeper, he felt of his pulse and then listened to the heavy breathing. He could not sit long, for, to be quiet with the thought—

then hurrying through his brain, would be to show a dead heart. Pacing restlessly for half an hour, while the charging steed of wakened conscience bore him on, he crossed at last, as with a bound, the mighty gulf of damning doubt, of paralyzing wilfulness, o'er which he had refused to gaze or cross in all the past, and now stood on the everlasting rock of conscious right, of loyal homage to conviction. Within his heart there grew a new, a joyous peace, a change, a something strange but sweeter than all songs of earth, except the shepherd's song upon the plains of Bethlehem.

At last he heard a step along the walk, and hurried down, with this outreaching of the soul upon his lips:

"O God! I thank Thee, that, where I was blind, I now see clearly."

Meeting the doctor outside, he said:

"Come in quietly and follow me "

There was something about his voice that prevented the physician saying, as usual:

"What's the matter *now*?"

Motioning him to a chair in the sitting-room, Mr. Wightman began:

"Doctor, you remember how I worked with you for high license last spring?"

"Yes."

"And you remember now provoked we got with those 'cranks' who wouldn't vote with us, but insisted on prohibition when they knew there wasn't a ghost of a show to carry it?"

"Yes."

"And how we carried it by only two votes?"

"Yes."

"And that we now have one hundred saloons, licensed and legalized by our two votes?"

"Well, I don't know about that. Is that all you've called me for at this time of night?"

"No, sir, there's business on hand; but it can wait till you answer my question. Didn't we, as Christian voters, cast the two deciding votes?"

"Well, I guess they wouldn't have won without our help."

"Then you admit that we helped?"

"Yes. I guess so."

"And every fellow who voted our ticket helped?"

"It looks pretty strong that way."

"Then those one hundred saloons are our legalized manufactories, aren't they?"

"I'd like to know what you are after. Do you want me to admit that I've taken at least one share of stock in Hell, while claiming to invest only in Earth and Heaven?"

"I only want you to answer my question, doctor. *Aren't—those—our—manufactories?*"

"Well, I suppose they are; and I begin to smell brimstone already. What next, old man? You'd make a capital surgeon."

Hastily telling the doctor about the son of his old friend, who had just graduated from college and come west to see them, and how manly he looked when he left in the morning, he concluded by saying:

"And now, doctor, I'm ready for business. Follow me."

Reaching the slightly open door, he paused, and, placing his hand on the physician's shoulder, said solemnly:

"In the presence of the All-seeing eye and before Him of whom it has been said, 'Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?' I want to show you the first real product of our manufactories, that has come to darken and sadden my home. Come in."

With his arm through the doctor's, the two entered, going directly to the bedside. Already, nature, in her revolt against man's prostitution and pollution of his divine made temple, had begun the work of cleansing; and, smeared over the white pillows and the cream tinted coverlid, was the first "up shipment" of the blighting cargo.

After a moment's silence, he continued, pointing with outstretched arm toward the prostrate "drunk:"

"There doctor, right there is our first, real, tangible product. I don't know how many more are scattered around in the city or farther away, darkening and blighting other homes, while we make no attempt to care for them. We haven't kept any books if we could; but the archives of Heaven have every one charged against us;—the full account doctor, for each victim, and against each who voted for the cursed traffic. Doctor, that young man is the son of a friend; and I helped to lay the trap for him, then sent glowing accounts of the West, all over the East, to lure her boys hither. How many have come and been ruined, I know not; but this I do know, that the fires of Hell, whether kindled here or hereafter, can only

burn as they have human bodies and heaven-born souls to feed upon."

Then turning and facing his companion, he added, while his voice almost failed him:

"Doctor Bronson, may God forgive me for the past. Standing beside this prostrate, senseless man,—within whose body even now is surging on the burning, scalding, licensed fire, and hunting to the last dark recess of his frame each torn and broken shred of flesh and nerve, lest some weak, undiscovered chain shall bind him yet to manhood,—I swear, that never more by voice or vote will I sanction or make possible one law-protected vender of strong drink. I'm done; and now my part shall be to build the broken walls and drive the enemy from our midst. Will you go with me?"

"I'm with you, Paul Wightman. I see the light. Drive on," came the hearty response, as the physician grasped the outstretched hand of his friend. Then reaching down, he felt the pulse of the unconscious victim. 'Twas but an instant, then he spoke:

"Paul, bring the light. His pulse is very weak. Be quick."

CHAPTER IV.

"PRACTICAL METHODS" APPLIED.

Paul Wightman hurried to the bedside, as requested. It required but a glance to show the effect which the poisonous drink was having on its victim. His face was already bloated and dark, his lips and tongue parched and swollen till the latter protruded from his mouth, and, with the irregular, labored breathing, showed the lack of heart action.

"His limbs and arms are already rigid," said the doctor as he administered a hastily prepared antidote. "The vile stuff was probably a mixture of poisons, and may cost this young man his life. It only proves what those prohibitionists have been preaching so forcibly, that when you once give men a license, no matter how high the price, they'll violate every law of God and man; and when we license them we *know* they'll do it. Paul Wightman, I now see that we deliberately sanction all that naturally follows our permission."

The doctor had risen and was watching the effect of his medicine. Not satisfied, he repeated the dose; then, feeling the pulse strengthen and the respiration grow more regular, he sat down to watch.

The merchant could not have been much more anxious, had the battling body been his own son. When relieved by assurance of improvement, he said:

"Doctor, if any man were to say that that boy

came west and fell among *thieves*, who would that include—the sellers, or others with them?"

Mr. Wightman, had any one asked me that question twenty-four hours ago, with all that it insinuates, I would have resented it with no small anger. I am now frank to say, that the voters of this city—ourselves among them—are an organized gang of thieves, robbers, murderers, wife-beaters, orphan-makers, drunkard-breeders, soul-destroyers, fully sanctioned and upheld by law. We demand our share of the money extorted from the victims of these one hundred dens—our dens—and put it into street-paving, water works, public buildings, or pay it to officers. Then we march forth with a steady step, while our victims stagger along the grand high-ways, till they either fall into the gutters or are hurried off to the lock-up, only to be bled again the next morning in our courts. We drink the life-giving water from our artesian wells, while our victims drink the burning, blighting dregs of hell, dispensed by our agents—the ones appointed by our gang to do our work. We build costly city-halls, court-houses and capitols, while the victims of our greed with their families, live in hovels. We pay good salaries to officials, nominated and elected to do the saloons' bidding, while the men who pay their wages to the licensed bars, are in rags and poverty."

Just then the unconscious man sat up, and before a dish could be brought, delivered the second consignment of "wet goods" all over the bed and beyond upon the rich carpet. The doctor arrived within range just in time to become the target for the

next upheaval, which caused him quickly to retire a safe distance, while the battery recoiled and collapsed with a groan.

With all of the seriousness of the situation, Paul Wightman could not smother a laugh at the doctor's sudden repulse and dilapidated condition.

"I am surprised, doctor," he remarked, as his sides shook with suppressed mirth; "I never saw you retreat before."

"No, Paul," was the response, and you never saw me face such a 'weep-on.

The one who had caused this sudden change from seriousness to mirth, relapsed again into unconsciousness. With some caution, Mr. Wightman approached while the doctor underwent repairs. The truce, however, lasted only a few moments, for, when the physician resumed his place, the pulse and breathing were unsatisfactory, and he administered another dose. Scarcely had it struck bottom ere it returned, chased by the fiery demons, who, in trying to cast out their destroyer, were themselves cast out.

Ere long, nature had so far cleansed the stygian pool, that the outward ravings ceased; but who or what could stay the coursing fire within?

The clock ticked on. The hours went by, unheeded by these two strong men, who spent the time either in moralizing on their part in this dark deed, or ministering to the silent sleeper.

At last a new day dawned—new in a stronger sense than either man had ever known; and, as o'er the lake outspread, a glassy mirror to the east, the sun arose, both walked in silence to the window.

They looked abroad, through new eyes, on a grander world of life and hope, death and despair, strangely commingled, than they had ever seen before. To say that they were "born anew" and passed from hearts of stone, from lives of careless, willful blindness, into a life of burning love, of careful, sacrificing thought for all the weak and fallen, would be but faintly to describe the new, strange peace they felt within, of purposes all harmonized with God's great monitor of truth and right, the conscience; aye, more, the sanction of the messenger of grace to men.

"I'll go, now," said the doctor, the first to speak. "I think he is past danger, and may sleep all day. You watch him and I'll call by noon. Nature will need time to remedy our brutal agent's onslaught. She's working well."

With scarce a word, Paul Wightman pressed his hand as he prepared to go; then held him at the door to say:

"Stop in at Brother Bliss', and ask him to come up as soon as possible. Good by."

A stir was heard within the hall, a moment later, and the merchant met his wife outside the door. Placing his arm through hers, they quietly descended, she waiting for the story that she knew lurked back of his tired eyes and troubled look. He hesitated but a moment, when they reached the easy chairs still standing close together as when, on the previous eve, the courtship of the lover husband and the loving wife had closed. The mutual confidence was

taken up where it had ended, and soon the thrilling tale was told.

A step outside ended the converse, and the pastor was ushered in, while Mrs. Wightman went to act as watcher.

"Brother Bliss," the merchant began, without answering the minister's questioning look, "I've been thinking of those three sermons which you preached just before election, last spring. Do you remember them?"

"Oh yes; I remember them well. Some thought they won enough votes to turn the election for practical license as against the Utopian scheme of prohibition."

"I guess that's so. At least they strengthened and nerved me for vigorous work. I can remember the texts to-day. The first was Paul's advice to Timothy to 'take a little wine for the stomach's sake.' The next was Christ's making wine from water. And the last was the verse containing the words, 'and wine that maketh glad the heart of man.' You remember that the chief point in each sermon was that the evil is not in the use but in the abuse of drink. You also insisted that there was no sanction in the Bible for prohibition, but simply temperance in all things."

"I remember them well, for they cost me much study. I really felt commissioned to deliver such a broadside as would demolish those misguided fanatics, and enable us to apply practical methods to a great question."

"That's so, Brother Bliss," said the merchant, rising, "practical methods to a great question."

Those methods have been applied, and I thought you would enjoy a study of the results. Come with me."

With his arm through this misguiding pastor's, Paul Wightman led him aloft. The wife had slipped out, and the two approached the scene of nature's struggle, with no other eyes or ears to witness.

'Twas a strange picture that arrested the curious eye of the minister, and his esthetical nature was shocked at the pollution. The unconscious face, still red and bloated, turned toward them on the smeared pillow. Stopping in full view of the surroundings, the merchant said:

"There, Brother Bliss, is the application of practical methods to a great question. We have one hundred places that are applying these practical methods, and they pay the city a good fee for the privilege. The practical methods wouldn't be so bad if you could apply them directly to the question, but boys have to be used as connecting links. The links aren't worth much when the experiment is finished. But instead of applying your practical methods, suppose we apply your sermons. Following your advice, my pastor, he took a little wine for the stomach's sake. He couldn't find any made of water and so had to take the next best—our licensed saloon-keeper's poisonous decoctions. You see how glad it made the heart of man. He's having a grand jollification now, you see—mighty glad heart—but it came near stopping forever. Only the doctor's antidote saved the poor boy. Brother Bliss, what do you think of your theology and its practical methods? Isn't there a screw loose somewhere?"

The minister hesitated. His face was a study. New thoughts were evidently struggling for mastery. Before he could decide on an answer, the sleeper's arms were thrown wildly about, his lips parted in a cry of pain, his eyes opened with a look of terrible fear, and, with a scream, he sprang from the bed.

CHAPTER V.

A LIQUOR MANIAC.

A glance at the erect form and glaring eyes before them, told that reason was dethroned and a demon in control. With a spring, he attempted to fly from the room, but Mr. Wightman caught him with a firm grasp. Before the minister could come to his assistance, the wild man turned, with uncontrolled fury, and struck this true Samaritan a blow such as only a giant could deal. The blood spurted from his nose and mouth, and he reeled backward, falling upon the bed, stunned but not unconscious. With a bound, the minister threw his arms around the maniac, pinioning him. Immediately a struggle began. Although the former was a strong man, he could not long withstand the wild frenzy and powerful muscles of his adversary; and, a moment later, was pitched headlong, receiving, as he went, a full broadside on the ear.

The madman again sprang toward the door, but not in time to prevent the merchant, who had rallied, from fastening his strong arms around him. Had not the minister come to his friend's assistance, the outcome would not have remained long in doubt. For only a moment the severe struggle lasted; then the wild man was overpowered, but not till each bore severe marks of the conflict with rum's victim.

Though deprived of power to control the body, the demoniacal spirit swayed the tongue as in olden times,

and screams, oaths and cursings followed in such quick succession and wild fury as to vividly portray the Hell of tortured souls. Until the doctor arrived, no power could stop the unbound demon; and he raved on, so wild, so wicked, so scorching in his fiery blasphemies, that the two men shrank back with faces white, excepting where the blood was gathering, as though to utter its strong protest and learn what enemy had made so fierce an attack. Ever and anon, with a wilder, louder shriek, the crazy fellow tried to spring up, and it seemed doubtful whether his fetter-cords would hold him.

At last the doctor came, administered an opiate, and the fiend incarnate ceased his outward demonstrations, because he had neither tongue nor body he could sway.

'Twas fearful still to view, as the frenzied frame, under the strong medicine, began to sink and mutter or rave incoherently, the eyes rolling wildly about and the hands clutching at unseen specters. At length, all was still; and as the doctor turned his attention to the wounded, they asked the cause of such a sudden change.

"'Twas only the alcohol and other poisons combined, attacking the brain as we drove them from the body," said the physician. "I think you must have doubled the doses. I presume he drank enough alcohol alone to have produced some fearful results, but the vile poisons which our licensed men of 'good moral character' mix, would give the Devil himself a touch of the 'tremens' were he fool enough to drink them. Too wise for that, he goes about getting

Christian voters to license his royal henchmen to dispense the damning stuff to thoughtless, weak or evil men, and unprotected boys. Eh, brother Bliss? Some of us, especially ministers and deacons, value ourselves pretty high and demand a good, round price, before we consent to become partners with his royal Inferno. Then he asks us to send around our boys, our neighbor's boys, or a few hundred poor, uneducated foreigners to pay the bills. Money isn't enough to wipe out the debt; it takes bodies and souls, and will, so long as we demand a share of the profits. Comes pretty high, brother Bliss?"

"Brethren," answered the pastor, "there is too much crowded into the last hour for me to digest at once. I think I have undergone pretty heroic treatment, but the diseased condition, perhaps, needed it. My feelings indicate a change, and if you'll have patience, I may be 'clothed' and in my 'right mind' in twenty-four hours. I thank you, my good brother, for inviting me here;" and he grasped the merchant's hand.

As this Christian minister, who had been a power to the license cause in his city, walked forth into the sunlight, he carried a "peeled" nose and a bruised, swollen, and ringing ear, the result of his first encounter with the other end of the liquor problem from the one he had before dandled and fondled without thought of harm. He indulged in thoughts as new and strange as those in which the merchant and the doctor had reveled a few hours before. The castle of his heart had been in a state of siege for years, with conscience asking unconditional surrender; but

he had stubbornly closed his ears, and given aid and comfort to the foe. Not till the very enemy he had succored, turned and rent him, did he discover how terrible was the viper he had helped to warm and feed. With such thoughts, it is not strange that he should fail to note the curious gaze of passers, as he strode along.

For hours the doctor and merchant watched the patient.

Alice Wightman, in a distant room, had not been aware of the events already narrated, and her parents thought it best to simply say that Joseph Strong was very sick; hence, as the day passed, she anxiously inquired how he progressed.

After hours of careful treatment, the doctor discovered symptoms of returning consciousness; and in the evening, a pair of swollen, bloodshot eyes opened in a bewildered way and looked about. The good physician understood that look, and spoke cheerily saying:

"How do you feel? Had a hard time, haven't you?"

The young man made no answer, but seemed trying to gather his scattered memory. Finally he said:

"What has happened and where am I?"

"Oh, you're among friends," was the cheery answer. "Just keep still and you'll be all right soon. Mr. Wightman will return in half an hour and then I'll go. You've been pretty sick."

At the name of Mr. Wightman, the whole truth dawned upon him, and the sweep of inward pain was clearly seen on his face. Then he asked:

"Are you the doctor?"

"I'm the man," was the reply.

"And am I here, sleeping off a drunk?"

"Guess that's about it. You came near dying from the stuff you got in the 'Palace.' But say no more. Alice Wightman doesn't know it and the rest of us believe you were unused to such poisons. You'll know better hereafter."

The hands of the troubled fellow swung restlessly over the bed, only to discover his condition and thereby increase his pain.

"Oh, what a disgrace, what a disgrace!" he murmured. "What will they think of me?"

"We are sorry for you and condemn ourselves for licensing such a place," answered the doctor. "Now rest and be yourself once more. I'll see you in the morning."

* * *

With a pause, High Joe looked around, saying:

"Getting tired boys and want me to stop?"

"Begorra, no," answered Pat Kinney.

"It eze like ze story of ze great novelle," exclaimed the impatient Frenchman. "We want ze rest; go on."

"Go on Joe," said the Colonel; "it isn't late. We are greatly interested."

"All right then, you shall have it," and he continued:

"It was some days before I got around, and I felt ashamed to meet any one; but no parents could have treated me more like a son. No word was spoken of the events of that night and day. They faded into the past and I kept away from the saloons. My first vent-

ure out was to attend church the next Sabbath with Alice and her parents. The confidence of the latter in my integrity was not shaken, and all was hearty friendship. In fact, my fall was too lightly passed over; but I subsequently learned that it was due to the feelings of condemnation which my friends felt for themselves, and the belief that I had been the thoughtless victim of poisoned drinks. They little dreamed of the thirst that haunted me day and night.

The good pastor Bliss, took 'Blind Bartimeus' as **his** subject, and preached the first clear, emphatic sermon I had ever heard, on our blindness and complicity, in licensing the liquor-evil and giving it legal sanction. 'Twas almost painful, as he confessed his own infidelity and blindness,—a 'traitor shepherd,' as he called himself; but his courage and heroism inspired me with the greatest respect I had ever had for ministers. I had listened to many 'goody, goody' sermons on the evils of intemperance, but they affected me about as soup without salt would—a little nauseating—for I knew the evils better than the speakers did. I knew also that we wild, young fellows and the poor inebriates needed not to be told how wrong drinking is, or the evils of the drink traffic, but that it was the well-dressed, prosperous men and women,—church members and all,—who listened, that needed arousing, even the ministers themselves. As the pastor came to his conversion, he pointed to his scars and exclaimed:

"Brethren, I praise God today that these scars will heal quickly and that the fire of hell is not wandering through my frame, burning away every fortress of righteousness and conscience; but what, oh what, can

we say of our victims who are numbered by the hundreds and perhaps thousands? Henceforth I am free, and my voice shall not be hushed by a license sop, no matter how high. The Almighty says, 'woe, woe, woe to him that putteth the bottle to his neighbor's lips.' I am done with it, but my work is only begun. I hope that every one who has named the Christ of Galilee as his redeemer, will join with me, and, with faithful hands rescue the perishing by banishing the robber gang."

I cannot tell the feeling as he closed. Dark looks and frowns were spread o'er many faces as they hurried from the church, while others gathered round the pastor to tell how they had been strengthened. As I went down the steps with Alice Wightman, her heart still warm with the emotions stirred, there burned within mine only one consuming flame, the scorpion sting, crying for drink.

A portly man only a step ahead, said to a friend:

"I'll make that fool repent his sermon ere the summer passes. He evidently let sentiment run off with his 'bread and butter.' "

Had I been alone, I might have struck the villain, I was so enraged; but, with the consuming fire within to quell, I passed along, the world not knowing what my breast contained, and I not knowing how far the barriers of manhood had been burned away or whither I should drift.

CHAPTER VI.

SLAVER AND SLAVES.

After walking a short distance in silence, I said to Alice:

"Who is that angry fellow? He walks like a lord."

"They call him the 'Boss,'" was her reply. "He owns *The Herald*, the leading newspaper, and is also the proprietor of 'The Palace,' the most richly equipped but worst saloon in the city."

"Ah, I understand. That explains his remarks."

"Yes, and he owns the men who want office, by reason of the power he possesses through his press and bar. He owns the men who want drink, because he purchases their manhood when they begin patronizing his saloon. He votes the latter for the former so as to elect them: and then he uses the former to help enslave and rob the latter. Two sets of abject slaves—nay, puppets. He plays both. Then he goes to church on Sunday, rents a good pew, pays liberally, silences the preacher, enlists the deacons and other voters by their love of party, till saint and sinner, washed and unwashed, church member and saloon bummer, business man and pauper, good lord and good devil, are all wild in the mad race of politics, each vying with the other to see who can do the best service for the 'Boss' and his party."

I looked up, surprised at such an arraignment from the lips of my fair companion, but she continued:

"You'll see something interesting in to-morrow's paper, I imagine. The good pastor will catch it. Perhaps the 'Boss' has discovered a small rebellion brewing. Father and the doctor will be the next targets. 'Twill be a surprise to him if his heretofore meek lambs begin to assert independence. He is at the head of one hundred licensed criminals. Just think, Joseph Strong, what they can do, if they choose. What a power we have placed in their hands, by making debauchery, robbery and murder, a legal and paying business. No wonder we are all slaves. The wonder is that we are alive; but the sacrifice may come yet. Oh, I never thought of it so, before. With the attempt to tell you who that man is, these thoughts rushed in."

Just then the "Boss" turned a corner and passed from view; but a new scene arrested our attention, and stopped all conversation. Reeling from side to side, so drunk as to scarcely be able to keep his feet, came a large, well-dressed man.

"Who is that?" I asked hurriedly.

"That is Major Wright," answered Alice. "He is the ablest lawyer in this city and very wealthy."

Just then he attempted to take the outer edge of the walk, and before he could stop, landed in the gutter. I could not disregard his needs, and hastened to assist him. Seeing that there was little chance of his getting home alone, I asked Alice to go on while I went with him. She looked surprised and curious, as we marched away, arm in arm, but I had a strange fellow-feeling for the unfortunate man. As he grumbled and swore or tried to get away, I saw

he was in no pleasant mood, but hung on until we reached his house and mounted the polished granite steps. He tried the front door but it was locked. This angered him and he gave it a terrific kick. It soon brought assistance, and the door opened, revealing a beautiful, richly dressed woman.

"Oh, Tom!" she exclaimed as she saw his condition, and the tears sprang to her eyes.

I shall never forget that quick, sorrowful glance and exclamation, or what followed. His angry feelings were evidently intensified by his wife's sad voice, containing as it did such a volume of reproach. As he stepped across the threshold, he raised his clinched fist, and, before I realized his purpose, struck his wife a terrible blow in the face. With a smothered groan she fell, striking her head upon the richly carpeted stairs.

Releasing my drunken charge, I sprang to her assistance. The blow sobered the husband somewhat, but also increased his anger. With an oath and, "I'll O Tom you," he drew back his foot, and would have given her a severe kick, had I not warded it off.

The door from the parlor opened just as the heavy blow was struck, and revealed a lovely girl about ten years of age. With a scream, she sprang to her mother and threw her arms beneath the bruised head almost as soon as it struck the floor.

Realizing the danger of this helpless woman from her rum-crazed husband, I gave him a push backward. He was too helpless to stand, and tumbled clumsily through the door, landing in a heap on the carpet. With difficulty, I bore the wife's unconscious

form to a large sofa in the sitting-room, telling the child to send for a doctor quickly. She hurried out with a white face, while I reached a pitcher of ice-water with the hope of restoring consciousness.

As a messenger was dispatched, the child returned with a look of despair such as childhood seldom wears. I could see that she thought her mother was dead, and reassured her by saying:

"She is stunned, my dear, but I hope not seriously hurt."

"Oh, isn't she killed?" burst from the pale lips, while great, lustrous eyes, revealing a wonderful soul within, spoke volumes of fear.

"No," I answered, moving my moist hand over the still brow; "she'll be better soon."

"A girl brought restoratives, but we labored without avail. Then the doctor came and I surrendered my charge, going in search of the husband whom I found in a drunken sleep. What a picture! The brightest lawyer in the city, of large culture, excellent business ability, and fine physique, stranded in the cursed stupor of alcohol, a shame to himself, a disgrace and terror to his wife and child, a loss to his city, his state and the nation, a slave to rum, a wrecked soul. There he lay, stretched at midday upon his own parlor floor, helpless, physically, mentally, morally; and all by the deliberate sanction of sovereign, civilized, Christian men, who, in turn for such betrayal, were receiving, Judas-like, a few hundred dollars of the blood money. Think of it, ye gods and spirits of justice; a human being in the nineteenth century, sold to the blackest bondage, the

most hopeless slavery, torture and ruin that man, in all his inhumanity, ever conceived! Nay, not one, but thousands thus sold each year, while the open doors lure fresh victims into that ceaseless tramp, tramp, of the death-march army. But I did not think all of these things then. I too was blind, and saw only a poor, drunken fellow.

Feeling that I could be of little further service, I walked silently home, where I received a motherly greeting from Mrs. Wightman, and followed her to the dining-room for a lunch. As she helped me to those appetizing dishes which only a real homemaker knows how to prepare, we talked of the sermon and what its effects would probably be, I telling of the threat of the Boss.

On adjourning to the sitting-room, we found Alice earnestly engaged in discussion with Deacon Johns, who deprecated the "unwise course" the pastor had pursued, and especially so, as he had never consulted with his "spiritual advisers." "It is the beginning of strife, I fear," he remarked, "that may wreck the peace of the church."

The girl I had left an hour before sat before that pious old dreamer, and the light, burning in her eyes, revealed deep thoughts, restless for expression. She, upon whom I had looked as a child, had suddenly expanded into a woman whose moral insight and loyalty to conscience said, through those eyes, "Stand back; a soul has taken command."

Suddenly she asked:

"Brother Johns, what did the minister say that troubles you so?"

"Oh," was the answer, "he made such a needless attack on license, antagonizing men like Colonel Bray. It will drive them from the church, I fear, and we shall not only lose their financial support when we have a large debt on our hands, but the opportunity to do them good."

I sat where the play of feeling on that queenly face told me the thoughts which such pharisaical words aroused. With great self-control, she suppressed the reply, and merely asked:

"Deacon, why *do* you men license the saloons?"

"We can't help ourselves, my dear. If we didn't, they'd sell anyway. Men always have sold, always have drank, and always will. You can't make them temperate by law."

"You don't think selling or drinking is right, deacon, and yet you give both permission?"

"No, I don't think either right, and we don't give permission; we simply tax the sellers, so as to make them pay a part of the expenses they cause to the city and county."

"You're sure it isn't permission, but a simple tax?"

"Yes, my dear, I'm *very* sure."

"Then *you* could go down, pay the tax, and proceed to sell, if you chose?"

"I suppose—by getting a license."

"But suppose the council wouldn't grant one? You know, deacon, they must be men of good moral character;" and she laughed a rippling laugh.

"Well, I don't suppose I could sell, legally, without a license."

"Then you *would* have to get permission?"

"In one sense, I suppose I would."

"Deacon, who says you can't sell without a license?"

"The state, through its statutes, my dear. The legislature makes the laws."

"And who is allowed to take away that embargo?"

"The city council, or village or town board."

"Then if they should refuse every man who applies, we'd have prohibition?"

"I suppose they have the right to refuse, if they choose."

"Deacon, how many men are there in this city?"

"About ten thousand voters."

"And how many licensed saloon keepers?"

"One hundred."

"Then we have prohibition for nine thousand nine hundred, and license for one hundred?"

"It looks a little that way, Alice, but you women don't understand such things."

"And prohibition is enforced for all but one man in each one hundred?"

"I say again, my dear, that you women don't understand these things. If you ever become voters you'll look at them differently."

With great persistence she continued:

"And still you ninety-nine can't keep the other fellow from selling, so you vote to give him permission? O, deacon, do you really think so?"

"Well, perhaps we could stop him if we were all united, but we're not"

"Why not unite, then?" What *should* be done *can* be done."

Just then the door-bell rang, and Mrs. Wightman found a messenger from Major Wright's, with the request that she go and sit with the wife, who had recovered consciousness but was very weak. He could tell no more.

"I wonder what has happened!" exclaimed Mrs. Wightman, as she came from the hall.

I explained, and volunteered to go with her.

"I wish you would," she said. "He may require your attention."

We reached the house a few moments later, when suddenly we heard piercing screams, and I rushed in, a terrible dread giving speed to my steps.

CHAPTER VII.

A DARING SERMON.

I never had known fear, but, as I opened the door into the sitting-room, a sight met my gaze that made my blood run cold, and paralyzed for a moment every nerve. On the floor lay mother and child clasped in one another's arms, while, with glaring eyes and demoniacal leer, the husband was trying to drag his victims by their long, golden hair. As he pulled with a madman's strength, their screams seemed music to his crazed brain. The wife had caught with one hand the edge of the door so as to stop all progress, and the torturer pulled away, not with the purpose of moving them, but that he might revel in their agony. Quicker than it takes to relate it, I comprehended all, and looked about for a weapon. Seeing in the corner a number of canes, I grasped one and sprang forward, aiming a blow at the tormentor. He was too wily, thus to be foiled, and loosing his hold, leaped aside.

I raised the prostrate forms and laid them upon the couch; but scarcely had I done so, ere I saw the wild eyes glaring through another door. As I grasped again the heavy cane, I discovered he was similarly armed, besides having a large knife. A battle was on, and its outcome might have been doubtful, had not Mrs. Wightman already called a policeman. At this moment the front door opened and the madman turned. Improving my opportunity, I reached him with a bound, and, with a heavy blow, felled him. Before

he could rally, the officer handcuffed and securely pinioned him. With superhuman strength, he arose, despite our efforts, and the wild, the agonizing shrieks, as he clutched at his throat, crying, "Take them off, take them off, they are strangling me!" told how far he had already gone in the broad highway of death, opened by law and sanctioned by sane, intelligent men.

As quickly as possible, we hurried the fiend-haunted man into the street, and hailing a passing wagon, bore him to the next station in that death-doomed road—the law's well equipped jail, strong enough to defy flesh and bones, though nerved by a hundred demons.

Driving rapidly down the street, we saw many on their way to a communion service at the church, among them Deacon Johns. The cries and oaths of the prisoner arrested all eyes, and as we passed that "pillar of the church," the scorpion's sting seemed to arouse the shrieking man to double fury. Rising to his feet, he shook his manacled hands toward the deacon, and shouted:

"Take them off, they're strangling me, burning me, sinking me to Hell! Good bye, Deacon Johns, and all your white-robed crew. Too late, too late! Oh, I'm dying, I'm dying!" and he threw himself wildly backward.

As we stopped before the jail and hurried the raving prisoner within, business men, church-goers, women and children, stopped to witness the scene.

"Good enough for him; he might have let liquor alone;" said a hard-faced bank president.

"The way of the transgressor is hard," added a stoop-backed, white-haired old minister, as he hurried on to his devotions.

"As we sow, so shall we reap," came in a well-rounded phrase from a tall, broad-shouldered, well-dressed college professor, as, with gold-headed cane, polished boots and glossy silk-hat, he strode along.

"The divil a bit any on ye cares for the poor mother's son what's drunk yer vile whiskey over the grand Palace bar 'till the hobgoblins o' hell has got their snaky arms around him. Ye all turns yer backs on the poor bye and let's the law and the divil take him. Oh, marcy, marcy, marcy, on the poor, poor man!" was the sympathetic language of a motherly Irish woman.

Leaving rum's victim in the horrors of delirium tremens, I hurried for a doctor, and then returned to the blighted home. Friends and physician were doing all possible to overcome the maniac's work. The sweet-faced Elsie—the father's pride but now his victim—lay moaning on a bed. Though soothed by the doctor's opiate, the horrors of those few terrible moments could not be erased from the delicate brain. Unconscious and still, with bruised face and hands, the wife lay where I had placed her. Anxiously the doctor shook his head and murmured, "Too bad, too bad!"

Seeing I could be of no service, I wandered down the street, my nerves fired by excitement, and the infernal appetite clamoring for drink. My salvation in this hour, lay in the bitter and turbulent thoughts surging through my brain. I had only feelings of

sympathy and sorrow for the man who was then being tortured by the troop of fiends which the state's law had set at liberty and given leave to rob and blight; but for the men and laws that made it possible, nay, sold permission, my heart was full of curses.

As I strolled along, not knowing whence I went, my ear caught sounds of Christian hymns, sung slowly, dolefully. I stopped and looked around, only to find that I was near the church door. Listening, I distinguished the words:

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,

"And all the world go free?

"No, there's a cross for every one,

"And there's a cross for me."

My brain reeled with sudden anger, and a strange power impelled me to enter. As I stepped inside the door, I knew not what was passing, for, through my mind, ran every word of cursing and blasphemy that I had ever heard. I loathed, abhorred the men who sang such songs, knowing, as I did, how guilty they were of the ruin I had that day witnessed. I had no love, no charity for them; but, had there been a dynamite bomb within reach, I could with pleasure have grasped it, and blown them all into eternity. I was wrong, but how terrible the evils I had seen! At last another hymn aroused me:

"Come thou Fount of every blessing,

"Tune my heart to sing thy praise;

"Streams of mercy never ceasing,

"Call for songs of loudest praise."

I waited till the last line was sung and the benediction pronounced; then, little knowing what I did, I shouted:

"Come thou Fount of every *blessing*? No, come thou fount of every *cursing*.—Tune my heart to *sing* thy *praise*? What for? One hundred licensed *salmons*? Never. Tune my heart to *shout* thy *sin*.—Streams of *mercy* never ceasing? No; streams of *murder* never ceasing.—Call for songs of loudest *praise*? No; call for *oaths* and *maledictions*." Then advancing from the door I raised my hands and, while shaking them wildly, shouted louder: "God don't hear you, ye whited sepulchers. Your hands are red with blood. Murder runs riot in your streets, legalized by your votes."

As I ceased speaking, I saw the fear on many faces, that a dangerous madman was in their midst, and without another word, I turned and stalked away.

My brain was now clear, although what I had said and done seemed like a dream—a wild nightmare.

At last I reached the house where I had left Mrs. Wighman, and crept in as though crape were on the door. All was quiet, save here and there, women ministered at the shrine of sorrow. Upon the couch, the form was still, the face was white.

"Is she dead?" I whispered to the physician.

"No," was his answer, "but she will never come to consciousness. I fear. The blows reached far deeper than the tender flesh or bone. They bruised the heart—perhaps it broke. If so, a few hours more will see as sweet and true a woman as ever crossed a man, cut down and dead by his own hand."

No, not by his own hand." I remonstrated in a hoarse whisper. "'Twas whiskey that did it—fired

his brain and nerved his hand—the vile drink that law sanctions. Doctor, how black this city's sins!”

The doctor sat with his face buried in his hands, and made no answer; so I arose and glanced into the room where lay the sweet child Elsie, across whose forehead was a long, dark bruise, ending in an ugly gash as it entered the golden hair.

Sick at heart, I hurried away without further question. The evening air fanned my brow, and I strolled on, not heeding whither I went, till I found myself without the city, where, as far as eye could reach, green fields and pastures, groves and rolling hills, told of God's goodness, love and bounty. The birds were twittering in the trees, or nestling fondly over speckled eggs or downy fledglings. The sheep and cattle grazed contentedly upon the green-sward, or lazily reclined in shady nooks and chewed their cuds in perfect satisfaction. I clambered up a hill and threw myself in wild abandon, full length, upon a massive rock. Gazing to westward, I saw the golden sun through haze and fleecy cloud, sinking to rest. The breeze, the trees, the hum of nature, and the chords of light spread out so gorgeously above, all spoke of peace, of perfect harmony in all the realm of dumb, unthinking matter. But all this peace could not subdue the storms within. At last I sat up and looked toward the city. The dusky shadows were already mingling tree and steeple, towering walls and distant hills in one dark mass of gloom.

“Twill soon be dark and then the hundred death-traps of you city, under cover of the night, will

ply their damning trade, while churches preach and sing and pray, and then away to peaceful slumber," whispered my bitter heart.

With a bound and curse, I sprang to the ground, and strode back toward the twinkling lights of Christian homes and legal hells commingled, naught telling to the wanderer's eye which one was which, excepting that the Devil's fire was brighter and shone out with stronger, more inviting beam. "Ah, wanderer," said I, "which one will ye choose?"

CHAPTER VIII.

A VITAL QUESTION.

Neither the quiet of the evening, the peaceful, golden light in the west, nor my rest upon the rock, was able to still the ever rising indignation in my heart. Before my vision, as I hastened toward the city, a dark and ghastly panorama constantly revolved. The pictures were, a lovely wife struck down; an innocent child's white face, written with a terrible fear that her mother was killed; a strong man, crazed and almost helpless, falling upon his own parlor floor; a maniac, gleefully dragging that wife and child by their golden curls; two unconscious ones, almost if not quite murdered; a man in the horrors of delirium tremens, cursing and raving as he was hurried to the lock-up prepared by the city for its victims; and then, a body of the men who had helped to make such scenes possible, singing sacred songs, and eating and drinking the symbols of a Savior crucified to save weak and fallen men.

I was no more the careless man who had sauntered to church by the fair Alice that morning, than the man of forty is the boy of four. I had that day come to see the licensed sale of alcoholic drinks in all its horrors—the blackest, most gigantic crime of crimes that nations ever sanctioned. Our liberty seemed like a farce, and our boasted republic but the breeding, fattening place of fiends incarnate, prepared to torture men as tyrants never dreamed.

"A city of free men?" queried conscience. "Nay, nay," came the cry from the very atmosphere I breathed," but a generation of abject slaves, purchasing some surcease from our own ills or burdens, by turning over to the torturer, for a price, the unwary, unprotected, unthinking, and weak ones, that out of them he may make spirits fit for hell. Aye, more; each drink-den is an open gateway thither."

I stopped my rapid march, overwhelmed by the thought: "A hundred open gates to eternal damnation, in one small city; two hundred thousand in this grand republic, and the flower of our homes, our colleges, our professions, our yeomanry, going in thereat."

I sat down by a babbling brook, and dipping my hand into the cool water, lifted it to my thirsty lips. 'Twas sweet and refreshing, but could not quench that strange, infernal thirst that arose from every recess of my being, unconquered and unsatisfied. I had felt strong to battle for my fellows, but the cry of appetite unnerved me; and, faint and trembling, I leaned back against a giant oak. The brook sang merrily on, the crickets began their chirp, and the frogs their evening song.

I know not how long I might have sat, had not a light hand suddenly rested on my uncovered head. I looked up and beheld a pair of lovely eyes fixed inquiringly upon me. Before I could rise, Alice Wightman, asked:

"Joseph Strong! where have you been; are you sick?"

"No, Alice; I'm not sick," I answered, too intent

on my own thoughts to be surprised. "Sit down on this green bank and answer a question for me."

Complying, she looked up and met my steady gaze. I read her anxious thought, but saw it disappear as she divined the deeper thoughts that stirred my heart. The lovely eyes, the rosy cheeks, the sweet, expressive mouth, all faded from my view, and I beheld only a responsive heart, a loyal, Christian girl, so sensitive and true that I could reveal every doubt or fear, question or aspiration with confidence. When, by an intuition born of sympathy, I felt all other thoughts were gone, I asked:

"Alice, why are patriotic, philanthropic, Christian men and women deaf or dead to all the miseries begotten by the drink-traffic?"

"I cannot tell, Joseph," she answered. "'Tis strange but true, and all so common that I have never solved the problem. Perhaps *you* can from this day's sad experience."

"I cannot, unless, like me before I met that staggering man, they have not been touched with the feeling of sympathy and love for suffering men. Perhaps they may be born anew and live pure lives themselves, but stop there; while only here and there is one so far renewed, that he is born all out of self, and into love and helpfulness for others. Such was the Master in His life of sacrifice; but I am forced to think that many of his disciples are like the self-reliant Peter. Not till he has been *sifted* and all self cast away, did the mighty Searcher of hearts say, 'Lovest thou me?' Then, too, for the first time could he answer: 'Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love

thee.' Behold the answer, Alice, and the wonderful, double commission: 'Feed my sheep'—'Feed my lambs.' Not with the growth of a love divine, but with a love *for* the divine, came such a sympathy for his brethren, that the Master knew he was ready to fulfil the grand commission. Am I right?"

I needed not her answer, for I had read in the deep but happy light beaming from her eyes, that I had awakened strong, responsive chords, tuned to a holier key than my own unchristlike feelings.

"Joseph," she said, while the spirit of another Mary beamed from her face, "you are not far from the kingdom. Who taught your lips to speak such thoughts, so true, so beautiful? I never saw so grand a meaning in those words before. Surely the sweet Comforter has found thee at this Sabbath hour, beside the babbling brook, and broken to thy troubled heart some portions of the bread of life, a sweeter, higher vision than the mass of yonder church-goers have received."

"No, Alice," I answered; "I've had too many cursing, bitter thoughts to-day, to allow aught that leads upward, a welcome reception. I am rebellious and sore with other's wrongs and sorrows to-night, and weak with my own."

"Then let us go home," she replied rising. "You have had too much excitement for one day. I was the only one at church who recognized you, and hoped to find you at home. I did not, and so, after going to Major Wright's, strolled out, fearing that you might need mental assistance to get back."

I smiled. and as we turned our steps homeward,

she told how Elsie had become conscious, but that the mother's pulse still fluttered so feebly and uncertain that the doctor had little hope of saving her.

Mr. and Mrs. Wightman were anxiously awaiting us; and, as we gathered round a simple meal, all words were softened by a Christian charity for wayward men, responsive to the thoughts breathed in the evening blessing. This strong man with his loving wife and child, dispelled the angry storms within my heart, leaving in their place a calm but firm conviction of the wrongs of rum, and a resolve to fight it from that day.

After tea I went to see Major Wright, requesting that no one sit up for my return, as it might be late. The unfortunate man was a sad spectacle. The ravings of the maniac were largely subdued by the physician's medicines, but the glaring, sleepless eyes, and shackled hands picking constantly at the unseen meshes of dragon-nets or serpent-coils, or brushing away the buzzing flies that, in imagination, stifled his breathing, declared the power of rum.

I asked if I could be of assistance, but was assured by the jailer that the crazed man was chained so securely, there was little danger or need of help. His bleeding hands and bruised face showed how true he had found the keeper's words.

"He can't get off the bed," explained the attendant. "We used to have wild times watching such fellows, but the fun is all taken out by those chains."

"Do you have many such cases?" I inquired, struck with the jailor's lack of feeling.

"Oh no, not many; three or four a week and some-

times two for a night. Then's when they make Rome howl. Get two such fellows to cursing, and the air becomes about as blue as I care to stand. I can't help wondering, sometimes, what kind of a pandemonium they'd make if one hundred or more were let loose in one place."

"The Bottomless Pit," I suggested.

"Yes," he answered, with a laugh, "all that the liquor traffic of this nation kill in a year. My! wouldn't they make Hell howl? If some of our innocent, license advocates could induce the 'Old Gentleman' who keeps that place, to let them look in for a five minute matinee, there wouldn't be any demand for tickets to the evening performance."

"Then you think," I asked, "that license don't help the matter any!"

"Help the matter!" he exclaimed with all the scorn he could command; "young man, are you a stranger here?"

"Pretty near," I answered.

"Then let me tell you," he continued, shaking his long arm and bony finger at me: "We've one hundred saloons, but two or three like Col. Bray's 'Palace, do more harm than all the rest. The kids, the dudes, the white-vested, well-polished-shoe young chaps get in there, and one diamond-studded beast can teach them enough that is vile and devilish in one night to forever stain, if not destroy, all that the best mother can teach her boy during his first eighteen years."

"You talk as though you'd been there," I remarked.

"Been there! I guess I have. You can't tell me

anything about a tony saloon. My! what pictures I've seen a bartender or lecherous gambler hand out to a table full of young fellows, in their 'teens'—pictures by the dozen, that would ruin the face of a bronze statue to behold. And then they'd sing songs such as only the 'syrens' would dare to whisper; then another and another, as beer fired the brain. The drink is bad and leads to drunkenness, but nothing equals the heart-stains, soul-pollution, crowded into one hour spent in such a place. They're at it now, from dive to palace, all over this city."

"And while the sleepy deacons, in the churches pray,
"A hundred devils capture souls, a block away."

"Then I guess I'll go and see them work awhile," I answered, a sudden impulse seizing me; and I hurried away, thanking the law's hard-handed executioner for his information.

As I went by a church, I stepped inside and found the room half full, with fourteen or fifteen young men present. The minister was discussing the doctrine of foreordination and predestination, while the audience seemed to believe it from the sleepy way in which they listened.

Hastening on, I visited several other churches, with similar results. Then reaching a low dive, I entered. The room was full of men, old, bloated, bent, feeble, victims of the drink fiend. His mark was stamped on face and form, and the very atmosphere was loaded with his poison. A few young men, already old in revelry, were in the crowd.

"Surely," thought I, "*this is a gate to Hades;*" and I instinctively looked for the dark passage downward.

Hastening on from place to place, only stopping

long enough to get a picture of the rushing trade in hell-wares and the number present, my heart grew sick from all I saw of woe, slavery and impending death; but I will only tell of one sad scene:

I entered the last vile place, kept by a burly brute, counted the inmates, and added my figures: "Two thousand three hundred and twenty, or over twenty for each place, and more than half of them young men!"

Just then the door opened and two children entered, their rags scarcely covering their nakedness. Advancing toward the bar, their pinched, white faces telling tales of hunger, the little girl said timidly:

"Please-sir, is-our-pa-here?"

"Here? No; get out you brats!" shouted the proprietor.

"Ma—said—he—must—be here;" spoke up the boy, hesitatingly, holding tight the hand of the shrinking girl who sought to flee.

"D——n your ma and the whole tribe of ragged brats!" stormed the enraged man of 'good moral character.' Rushing from his place, he seized the boy, and, with a violent kick at the retreating, almost baby girl, sent her rolling and senseless into the corner. Then hastening to the open door, with a swing over his head, and a cry of pain and alarm from the childish lips, he hurled the boy high into the air. So quickly was it done that I only realized the murderous deed, when I heard the little body strike the stone-paved street, with a dead thud; and my heart stood still.

CHAPTER IX.

WHO PAYS?

Before I could move, a sturdy, begrimed man sprang from one of the card tables, and, with a terrible oath, shouted: "Those are my children. Take that, you infernal brute!" and he struck the saloon-keeper so severe a blow as to send him sprawling through the door. Then jumping upon him before any one could interfere, he stamped and kicked the life almost out of him. I hastened to the still form of the baby girl in the corner, and raising it in my arms, limp and apparently lifeless, reached the door just as the others stopped the crazed parent. As he saw me, he grasped my charge, exclaiming: "Oh, my baby, my baby! Has he killed you?"

Pressing her to his bosom, he rushed out, where kind hands had raised the unconscious and bleeding boy. The face of the father, as he beheld his other child, was dark and threatening. His anger was too severe to be softened by tears of sorrow; and muttering to his precious charge, he stalked away, some fellow-workmen carrying the boy.

I need not tell what followed—the mother's first grief, or her wonderful heroism in stifling her own sorrow as her unconscious babes were borne into a cheerless, poverty-stricken room, and laid upon a pile of straw and old rags. The husband dared not meet his wife's eyes, for a more terrible fire burned therein than any stirred in his own besotted breast.

A doctor had been called, and soon, with a piece of candle as his only light, was examining the dead-like forms.

"I feel a slight pulse," he said, preparing some medicine; and as soon as administered, passed his hands over the little frames, shaking his head ominously.

"Broken and bruised", he murmured; "but they may live, poor things, to be cripples for life."

Then turning to the father, he said severely:

"Ben Pitts, your appetite for drink has caused this. Will it be enough to reform you?"

The look of pain in the drunkard's face showed how the taunting shaft had entered a fresh spot in his heart; but it faded as he answered:

"No, doctor, I can't reform with all those saloons to pass. I've tried and tried and fallen, till I can't try. You, doctor, voted to place them there, and I am paying the fee, in spite of my wife and babes. I toil and toil, and you fellows and Pat Moran get it all."

Meeting his wife's gaze, he covered his face with his hands, exclaiming: "O, Mary; our babes are killed and I am to blame!"

Seeing a number of women ready to help, I hurried out. The streets were still, the windows dark except here and there the torch to hell-gates still blazed on. Dragging my weary feet along the cheerless walks, the events of one brief Sabbath revolving wildly in my mind, there came this thought:

"Is there a heaven, and a God who loves his creatures and rules creation?"

In spite of all my bitterness, an answering voice, as from the stars, said, with a ring of life and hope that seemed to light my way and lift my heavy burden:

"The father loves, and all he wills is love. Only his children, in their blind, forgetful worship of the golden gods, will suffering for their brethren. The Prince of Nazareth proclaims a day of love, joy and peace to men."

I hastened on, the tumult in my heart, like waves when storms have ceased their wild, wind sweep, rising and falling in mighty surges.

A bright light burned within the window of my new home; and, ere I reached the door, it opened and two anxious faces peered into the darkness.

While I divined the reason for this midnight vigil, my tired feet climbed slowly the steps, and brought my face within the lamp-light's glare.

'Twas but a moment that foreboding fear darkened the mother's brow, or anxious care the daughter's handsome face, for I exclaimed: "You disobedient children, what shall I say?"

"That we couldn't retire without knowing where you were, my boy," answered Mrs. Wightman, holding out her hand in a motherly way.

"And that you didn't need our help," added Alice with a smile of welcome.

A moment later, as I looked up from the couch on which I had thrown myself, Mrs. Wightman asked:

"Joseph, have you anything to tell us for our long hours of waiting?"

Alice drew her chair before the couch, while her mother, from her arm chair at my head, placed a warm hand upon my hot forehead. I knew by her earnest voice, and the interested face of my fair watcher, that the question was deeper than idle curiosity, so I answered:

"I would gladly tell you all, but it's so late, we would better wait till morning. 'Tis only another sad chapter in Rum's dark story. My heart is too bitter to talk of it now."

"We want to quell those bitter thoughts before you go to rest," said Alice, "for we cannot harbor storms nor heart blights in our home."

"Yes," answered the mother, "but our words may not do it. Let us try a hymn;" and before I could reply, there broke upon my troubled ear, in melodious chords, such as angels might chant, those words that so grandly compass the whole gospel of redemption and peace:

"Jesus, lover of my soul;
Let me to thy bosom fly."

As the beautiful words, sung by hearts attuned to Heaven's message, went flooding through my soul, the storms and restless waves rolled out, till they were lost within the sea of peace; and as they sang, I dropped asleep.

I knew no more, till, on my dreaming ear, a merry, rippling laugh broke in familiar tones, which was followed, as it neared me, with:

"O, Joseph Strong, you'll lose your breakfast if you sleep too long."

Opening my eyes, I saw Alice standing near me in the full morning light, a sunbeam of merriment.

Comprehending the situation, I sat up, feeling as though I had entered a new world.

During breakfast I related the events of the previous evening, and Mr. Wightman remarked:

"You'll be a full fledged reformer, if you indulge in many such excursions. The good people of the city don't know the deeds of darkness going on in their licensed shops; and if they did, I don't know as it would stir them much. Selfish ease is more powerful than love for suffering humanity. If one hundred pest houses were running full blast, you wouldn't have been the only man out last night to learn what they were doing."

"That is so," said Alice, "but I want to know what they will do with Ben Pitts if Pat Moran dies."

"I'll find out," I answered. "It will make lively work if he is arrested and tried."

"I'll go his bail, if necessary," said Mr. Wightman.

As I left the house, at a late hour, Mrs. Wightman followed me to the door, saying for my encouragement:

"Joseph, my confidence in your strength is much greater since you ran such a gauntlet of saloons last night. You may have seen that I was very anxious."

"I have," I answered, "and you have reason to be, for there's fire in my bosom that requires constant fighting."

Before I reached the foot of the steps, a shower of roses fell around me, and I looked up, getting a vision of the fair Alice, embowered in a profusion of flowers on the porch above. With a laugh, she exclaimed:

"Will you wear a white one if I'll cut it?"

"Of course I will," I answered, catching a beautiful one as it fell.

I pinned it to my coat and strode away with a buoyancy of heart such as no other smile could have given. Meeting a workman, I inquired whether there was any danger of Ben Pitts being arrested.

"Yes; they're after him already," was the answer. "Colonel Bray swore out the warrant. The doctor says Moran can't live."

I hurried to Pitts' house where I found him, with haggard face, watching his unconscious children. A number of workmen were conversing in the hall, and I asked whether he had any money to hire an attorney.

"No," answered one, "but we are going to raise some."

"Who will you get?" I asked.

"We'd like Major Wright, if he wasn't in the calaboose."

"He'll be out soon, and I think I can enlist him."

"Are you a lawyer?" queried several, all eyes looking at me.

"No," I answered, "but I *will* be some day. I wish I was now."

"You're the man then, to see Wright," said one

who seemed quite a leader; "but let me talk with Pitts first."

He had disappeared but a few moments, when a policeman came up the stairs, inquiring for Ben.

"He's watching his dying children," remarked a grimy fellow.

"Why didn't Bray get a warrant for Moran?" asked another.

"I don't know and don't care," answered the officer brutally, starting for the door.

"No, you're one of Bray's pets," said the workman, stepping in front of him. "Guess you'd better wait till we see if Ben can leave."

"Yes," chimed in the others, closing around the policeman in a threatening way.

Just then the leader came out, saying:

"He'll be ready whenever he's wanted."

A half hour later, the accused stood before the municipal judge, and, at my suggestion, pleaded "not guilty," to the complaint of assault with intent to kill. Then, at his request for a week's adjournment that he might procure counsel and prepare for trial, Colonel Bray came forward and whispered with the district attorney, who at once opposed it.

"Whose attorney are you, Colonel Bray's or the state's—the people's?" asked a brawny fellow as the prosecutor closed his remarks.

"Order!" shouted the judge; "keep quiet, or some of you fellows will be locked up."

"Another one of Bray's humble servants," remarked some one in an undertone, and a laugh went

round; at which the indignant prosecutor looked angrily over the crowd, saying:

"None of your d——n business whose attorney I am;" at which the crowd laughed again.

Just then Mr. Wightman entered and took a seat near the front.

"I'll grant the week's adjournment, provided the prisoner gives good bail," remarked the judge, evidently thinking he had named an impossible condition.

"I'll sign his bond, your honor," said Mr. Wightman, rising, and the crowd began to clap and stamp.

When quiet was restored, the judge said coldly, but with evident respect for the composed merchant:

Your name will be sufficient, Mr. Wightman."

In spite of the frown of the "Boss," all matters were quickly arranged, the prisoner set free, and the crowd dispersed, many shaking hands with the man who dared antagonize the leading politician.

Scarcely were the men on the street, when some one announced that Pat. Moran was dead; and the news flew from lip to lip, while the question was anxiously repeated:

"What will Ben Pitts do?"

CHAPTER X.

THE MILLS GRIND ON.

As I saw Ben Pitts, with a sad, anxious face, hurry toward his darkened home, I remembered a row of prisoners sitting in the court room, and was seized with a desire to witness their arraignment. Returning, I beheld a dozen men, some with blank looks, others with care and anxiety stamped on every feature, awaiting the onward grind of the mill. The officers, judge and district attorney were whispering together, glancing occasionally at the prisoners. At last the heartless work began by the court saying to the first man:

"You're arrested as a tramp and for resisting an officer; what have you to say?"

"I am not a tramp. I was just going from Chicago to St. Paul to find work, and got out of money. I didn't have much to start with, and when I got here there was no place open to me but the saloons. I got a drink and started for the country to find a place to sleep, when a policeman arrested me. I hadn't done anything and I didn't think he had a right to arrest me."

"Got any money?"

"No, sir."

"Think you can get out of town and not be seen here again if I let you go?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then you may move along."

Greatly relieved, the poor fellow hurried out, while the others underwent a similar grind, showing some to be lazy, shiftless tramps, and others industrious but unfortunate men; then a dozen or more "drunks" were marched in.

"What have you to say?" asked the court of the first. "You are charged with being drunk and disorderly."

"I don't know, yer honor, only I guess I was drunk. I feel as though I had been."

"What's your name and business?"

"My name, yer honor, is Peter Mackin. I've been up in the woods ten months cuttin' hay, watchin' cattle, makin' roads, choppin', drivin' tote team, and most everythin'. I live down here 'bout fifty miles."

"Got any family?"

"Yes, yer honor; I've a wife and three little children;" and the tears filled the man's eyes at the thought.

"Any money?"

"I dunno, I'll see;" and he drew out a thin, well worn purse, which he opened. Looking up at the court with surprise and pain, he continued:

"No, sir; I've no money. I had two hundred dollars last night, when I went into the saloon with the boys. Its all gone now, but I don't know where."

"Where did you get two hundred dollars?"

"From the lumber company. They paid off ten of us for nearly a year's work. I tried to get it every month to send to my wife but the company wouldn't pay until we got through."

"How has your wife lived?"

"She's took in washin' and ironin', and gone out sewin'. I wrote to her that I couldn't get any money and she wrote back, 'Never mind, Peter; we'll get along some way, and when it all comes we'll pay it on our home;' and again the man's head dropped and the tears ran down his face.

"Why didn't you keep away from the saloon, then?"

"I meant to Judge, but the boys urged me, till I finally took a glass of beer. I didn't mean to drink more but I suppose I did. I've an awful appetite when it gets started. I went into the woods where there ain't no saloons 'cause I couldn't let drink alone."

"Why didn't you let it alone then when you came back? You're a large, strong fellow, and ought to be a man."

"I know it, Judge, but I aint no man; I'm only a big machine, what can't run itself. When I'm in the wild woods and swamps, where there's only deers, squirrels and wild animals, I'm all safe; but when I come where men live I ain't safe. There's robbers on every street and in every hotel, boardin' house and restaurant."

"But you can be a man, and let drink alone."

"No, *I can't*, yer honor. No man what's got my appetite can. Soon's he gets into the city he smells the drink and then he forgets everythin'." Then growing more eloquent he continued:

"There's thousands of fellows just like me, Judge, —an army of poor men, who just work, and work, and try to be men, but they can't. We love our

families, our children, and want to be men, but all we do is to earn money and pour it into the saloons. They're placed where they'll catch us every time. They've got all I've earned, and I hain't anything to carry home to my wife. She's all fixed up now, waitin' and expectin' me, and the children are waitin' too. I hain't kissed them for ten months 'cause I couldn't stay where the saloons are. When I got two hundred dollars yesterday, Judge, I was a proud man, and thought how it would make Mary's eyes shine when I put it all into her hands. It don't need more'n one saloon in such a city, to take in all we fellows can earn. O Judge! I'm ruined and can't go home. Send me to jail, or better, to the state's prison,—anywhere you please;" and sitting down, the poor man buried his face in his hands and sobbed convulsively.

"Are you one of the men who came down from the woods yesterday?" asked the court of the next.

"Yes, sir."

"And have you spent all your money in the saloons?"

"It's all gone, your honor."

Similar questions were put to the next seven, with like results.

"Where's the tenth man?" asked the judge.

"Ned Kittle was a teetotal fellow and skipped for home last night," answered one. "We all promised to, but a fellow coaxed us in and treated us first. We found he keeps one of the tony saloons."

After figuring a few moments the judge continued:

"So you've lost nearly fifteen hundred dollars—nine of you. Can't you learn to stay away hereafter?"

No one answered, but the doubtful looks exchanged showed how conscious they were of a lack of will power sufficient to cope with their common enemy.

"I'll have to fine you ten dollars and costs, or ten days in jail, for the city can't overlook such drunkenness." was the court's magnanimous conclusion.

The remaining men were bloated drunkards, with every sense of manhood apparently burned out, and as they had no money, of course went to jail. Whatever they earned or begged, the saloons got, while the county paid a periodic bill of costs of from three to five dollars apiece.

The loggers' fines and costs amounted to about fifteen dollars each, and, as they were practically penniless, they, too, were marched off to the lockup.

I followed them out, with my heart full of the old bitterness. A few blocks from the City Hall, I passed "The Palace." The door stood open and I heard the glasses clink, while the atmosphere was charged with drink odors.

I had left Mr. Wightman's, buoyant and strong; but the scenes in court depressed me, and the perfumes from "The Palace" aroused the latent fires.

"Just one drink!" cried appetite, and I stopped, irresolute. Suddenly a hand touched me, and at the words, "Come on, Joseph," a strong arm and resolute step bore me along. I knew the voice, but before I could speak, Mr. Wightman said:

"I'm going to see how Major Wright is. Will you come with me?"

I complied, and we found a poor, weak fellow, but the "tremens" was gone.

"O, Wightman!" he exclaimed, as the merchant shook his chained hand; "I must have a drink or die. They won't give me any."

"No, Major, it won't do now. You must straighten up for I've a hot fight on hand and shall depend on you. You never failed a fellow in need, did you?"

"No, *sir*," came the emphatic answer, the man already quieted and interested. "What is it?"

"I haven't time to tell you, but my friend, Mr. Strong, will. Good-by Major;" and the busy man hastened away.

As the victim of a barbarous civilization, turned to me with an eager look, I told the whole story. When I finished, he exclaimed:

"I'll fix them! I wish you'd go and get me the papers. I'll fight the fiends for Ben Pitts if I can't for myself. Can you lend a helping hand?" and he looked up inquiringly.

"I'll do all I can," I answered, and hurried away.

On my return, he exclaimed:

"Say, can't you get these fetters off?"

"I guess so," I replied, and hastened for the jailor.

A few moments later, as the chains fell clanking to the floor, he said:

"I wish I was in my office."

Then a thought arrested his eagerness, and he laid down the papers. Looking at me curiously, he asked:

'How did I come here? Do you know?'

"Yes, but that would better wait till another time."

"But I want to know now. Did I hurt any one? Tell me quickly;" and he grasped my wrist imperiously.

"Go on!" he shouted, as I hesitated. "Did I do anything to my wife or child? Where are they now? Tell me."

"You would have killed them if I had not prevented you."

"Did I hurt them? Don't torture me with suspense;" and his voice was full of pleading.

"Yes, you hurt them, but I haven't seen them since last night, so I can't tell how they are."

"Then hurry away and find out," he exclaimed with a quick push. "*Don't be gone long*," and throwing himself back on his bed, he murmured aloud:

"Oh, Rum, thou blighting tyrant! Thou hast no regard for the rich or poor, the bad or the good. Thou dost gather them all in, broken hearts, blasted hopes, bruised bodies and ruined souls. Thy chains are stronger than iron and surer than brass."

CHAPTER XI.

A BREAK IN THE CLOUD.

I had not gone far, when I purchased of a news-boy, the leading morning papers, and scanned their contents for the previous day's happenings. In "The Herald" I found this article:

"POLITICS IN THE PULPIT."

"Yesterday morning at Christ's church, the congregation was treated to a new departure. Pastor Bliss had evidently seen some fool who guzzled whiskey till he was crazy, and attacked his friends. The minister went for the saloons, rough shod, condemning the whole traffic, license laws, the men who vote for restrictions, and the parties that make it possible to regulate the evils. He accused voters and laws, parties and leaders, as in league with the devil, and stirred up a hornet's nest which, if we mistake not, may sting him out of his very comfortable and fat pastorate. Men attend church to hear sermons not political harangues. Preachers put their foot in it, whenever they try to instruct in questions of government and public policy. We trust the pastor will quickly recover from his peeled nose and bruised ear, and regain his equanimity."

A little below was the following:

"A COLD-WATER CRANK."

"Emboldened evidently, by Rev. Bliss' violent language, a cold water crank entered the church yester

day afternoon, at the close of communion service, and not only called those assembled, whited-sepulchers, claiming that their hands were red with blood, but quoted one of the sacred hymns in a most shocking manner. He skipped out before the police arrived or he would now be feeding on bread and water at the city's expense. Our courts don't fool much with such hair-brained fanatics. A few days in the calaboose cools them off. We warn this man and his blatherskite friends to go slow."

In another column, with glowing headlines, appeared an item which read:

"CRIME IS EPIDEMIC."

"Following the cranky sermon and the exciting scene at Christ's church yesterday afternoon, came the cuminating act of crazed fanaticism. Ben Pitts, a low drunkard, stimulated by drink, knocked down, stamped upon and kicked Pat Moran, near midnight, so brutally that he will probably die. Lynch law is none too good for such a fiend. We have great faith, however, in our courts and officers giving him the full penalty of the law. A warrant is out for his arrest."

Finding nothing further, I opened "The News." In addition to reports similar to the above, but more highly colored, appeared the following:

"A WHISKY SELLER.

HOW THE TRAFFIC EMBRUTES HIM."

"The two little children of Ben. Pitts entered Pat. Moran's saloon last evening and inquired for their father. Moran was so angered that he kicked the girl senseless and pitched the boy headlong into the

street, breaking bones and nearly killing both. They lie at home, unconscious, and may die. Pitts meted out Moran's punishment, as we have elsewhere related. *This is the fruit of the dice.*"

"A WHISKY DRINKER

HOW ALCOHOL EMBROTES HIM "

"Major Wright, in a fit of drunkenness, yesterday noon, knocked down his wife, and later, dragged her and his sweet child Eileen out the house by the hair. Only the intervention of a stranger and the prompt arrival of the police, saved a double murder. The gen. has recovered and is sitting up, but the wife is still unconscious. Doctors are entertained of brain fever. The whisky that did it came from 'The Palace!' *This is the fruit of a bad saloon.*"

"A WHISKY BETTING GGER

HOW THE TRAFFIC EMBROTES THE VOTER."

"We overheard a lively argument, yesterday, between a fair damsel and a gray-haired church member. The former condemned the whole license system and scored the ninety-nine voters for licensing the one hundredth; while the latter apologized, insisting it was regulation and restriction; and when he was completely cornered, crawled out at the little end of the horn, by saying, 'you women don't understand these things.'

"While we have always stood for license, we come pretty near dropping the whole thing when strong churchmen apologize for it. The large revenue to the city is all that prevents us. And all of these things are the results of putting a price on the most

damnable crime of the century. *Sell not, taste not, and sanction not*, is evidently the only way to have a lively conscience, for it gives any man who does either, a seared, unsafe monitor in his heart. The life-giving breath of heaven goes out when the soul scorching breath of hell comes in. *Behold one day's record of licensed damnation!*"

I had been reading these as I walked along, but now stood still in amazement. Such words from a well-known political paper, like the News, showed that the drink demon might go so far as to drive away his strongest supporters.

Recovering, I hurried to the Major's home, where my ring was answered by Alice Wightman. I found the report I had read, true, and the doctor would give no assurance of the mother's recovery.

"Little hope, little hope," were his most emphatic words.

In spite of a pleasant smile and subdued "goodby" from Alice, as I hastened down the steps, I detected an intense light in her eyes, that betokened how deep was her sympathy for the victims of alcohol, and the hatred aroused against the destroyer.

Marking the various articles, I handed the papers to Major Wright, on my return, saying, "those will tell you all." His eyes quickly scanned one after another, till it rested on "A Wolsky drinker."

"O, God!" he exclaimed; "have I killed my patient, loving Evangelina? Spare her, I beseech Thee, and give me power yet to prove how I love her and my sunny, laughing Elsie. Help me to break the chains of appetite and yet be free."

I stood speechless before the torture I beheld. Suddenly he sat up and almost hissed in an undertone:

"Call the jailor; call the jailor! Be quick."

As I returned with him, the excited man tapped the paper with his finger and said, "read that."

"I know it all," answered the officer, coldly.

"Then unfasten my feet quickly and let me go. She's dying—my wife, my Evangeline. I've killed her. Be quick."

The jailor hesitated and looked at me inquiringly. This was too much for the grief-stricken man, and he shouted at the top of his voice:

"Take—these—devil—chains—off.—I'm—a—man—now! Do you hear?"

"You unfasten them and I'll go with him," I said, hurrying out to find a carriage; but none was in sight. Starting to return, I confronted the Major, hatless and coatless. He would wait for nothing, but hurried down the steps, fairly dragging me along. I insisted on his walking or he would have broken into a run. Suddenly he saw a carriage before a store, and in a moment the horse was untied. I followed him as he sprang in, and we went flying down the street at a break-neck speed.

'Twas a short ride; then he pulled the galloping horse up at the block, dropped the reins, sprang over the wheels, through the gate and up the steps like a madman. I was close behind, fearing I must forcibly stop him, when he suddenly halted, turned the knob as though he were a burglar, and hurried in on tip-toe. He seemed to know just where to go, and before any one could interfere, knelt at his un-

conscious wife's bedside. With the tenderness of a mother, he laid his cheek against the burning temple, and placing his arm caressingly over the still form, sobbed convulsively.

Suddenly, unnoticed by the silent friends, the golden-haired Elsie crept from her own bed and knelt by her father. As if by instinct, he slipped his arm around her, and the broken, suffering family was again united. One by one, all, except the physician, stole away with moist eyes, that the hovering angels of life and peace might spread their heavenly balm o'er heart and soul.

"But, hark!" whispered the bitterness in my heart. "Did ye hear that fiendish chuckle? All Hell is making merry, for they know that the chains upon the kneeling slave will hold him captive; and, as Rum's demons dance around the hissing, howling pit of woe, they chant in guttural tones of glee:

Laugh and sing, laugh and sing;
Earth to Hell its off'rings bring.
Love and light, all that's bright,
Soon decay before my blight.
Fireside altars blaze and burn,
But their joys I quickly spurn.
Hearts of love soon turn to hate,
Then they find, alas, too late,
One by one, I gather in
All that's best, destroyed by gin.
Bar-rooms here and bar-rooms there,
Traps of death placed everywhere.
I have fetters strong, and there
Are a hundred places, where,
Day by day, new ones are forged,
Till the gates of Hell are gorged.

Hearts may sorrow till their grief,
Washed in tears, shall find relief;
Then I'll scourge the bondman back
Till he writhes upon the rack.

Laugh and sing, laugh and sing;
Christian men *their* off'rings bring,
Licensing my work of woe,
Everywhere that men may go.

The house was still as death, save here and there a light step. The two kneeled still beside the bed. At last the husband, in a tender, pleading tone, murmured:

"Oh, my loved Evangeline! Will you not come back to us again, if only that I may look into your once happy eyes and read forgiveness? The accursed bowl shall never touch my lips again, if you will smile once more and laugh and sing, as of old. Oh, my loved one! Can you not hear my pleading?"

I shall never forget the solemnity of that hour. No one whispered, scarcely breathed. Suddenly the unconscious head turned upon the pillow, the body moved, and a white arm stole slowly out and wrapped itself around the pleader's neck, so lovingly that the doctor also withdrew with moist eyes. One by one, each watcher tip-toed past the door and viewed the sacred sight, none daring to speak or molest them, while, methinks, the angels came and went, carrying the news of life, love, hope and home to heavenly choirs above.

CHAPTER XII.

MERITED REBUKES.

A sudden ring of the door-bell broke the oppressive stillness. Alice answered it, and admitted Deacon Johns.

"I have just heard," he began, "of the assault by Major Wright, and I came to see his victims. How are they?"

"They are improving, we hope," she answered.

"I would be glad to see them, for I *sympathize* profoundly with Mrs. Wright," he continued.

"Yes," said Alice dryly, as she arose; "I will ask whether they can be seen."

"By the way," added he, stopping her, "was it in this parlor that the Major lay drunk?"

"I presume so," she answered, hastening out.

As if he divined her coming, the kneeling man, who had heard all, looked up, saying:

"Let him in, if the doctor does not object. Make no explanations."

Hearing the remark, the physician noted the strengthening pulse for a moment, and his face brightened, as he said:

"She is much better; he may come."

A moment later, the deacon entered and halted before the strange scene. As he stood there, not knowing what to say, the eyes of the injured woman opened, and, with a smile, she said:

"Good afternoon, Deacon. Will you be seated?"

"I can't stop long," was the rather stiff reply. "Came in to see how you and Elsie are."

"Were you *deeply* interested?" asked the Major in a tone of mingled contempt and sarcasm.

"I *was* *very* much interested in them and yourself."

"Hadn't much interest at election time last spring, had you?" and the bloated face looked around with increasing scorn.

"You were not in trouble then, were you Major?"

"Wasn't I, Deacon? Isn't a man who has a drunkard's fetters on him, in trouble?"

"I presume he is; but, thank God, I don't know from my own experience."

"And knowing *our* bondage, you worked and voted for licensing as many of the poison-venders as would pay the price. Had you any *interest* in us poor fellows and our blighted families *then*, or is it only aroused when we have done some awful deed? There are more than a thousand voters in this city, whose so-called sympathy,—like yours,—comes too late. A religion that allows its votaries to license the destroyer, and then run after his victims with crocodile tears, won't redeem men very fast. I and my blighted family, with hundreds of others, are the fruits of such unchristian civilization. It is more cruel than the beastly idol-worship that made the ancients throw their innocent children into the red-hot arms of a soulless Moloch. Henceforth I hope to live sober, and were it not for these open dens, I know I could succeed."

I stood where I could see the Deacon's face, and knew that the Major's words were arousing only feel-

ings of anger. Too courteous to interrupt, he waited, and then answered coldly:

"You are in no condition to-day, Mr. Wright, for reasonable conversation. Some other time we may talk these matters over;" and with this he bowed himself out.

An hour later, the doctor announced Mrs. Wright out of danger, and the Major appeared, clothed and ready for work.

"Can you go with me to my office?" he asked. "My appetite is crying for drink, and nothing but work and excitement can keep it down. I want your help."

"All right," I answered, and we hurried to the office.

"These rooms bespeak the condition of their owner," he remarked, opening the windows, and dusting and arranging his disordered desk. Then sinking into an easy chair, he said:

"Now tell me about that affair, again. It seems like a dream."

As I seated myself, the unnatural glare of his eyes startled me, the muscles in his face twitched convulsively, the color came and went, and I knew from these signs and my own thirst how fearful was his conflict. For half an hour I pictured as vividly as possible all I had seen, till appetite was driven into the background.

"I wish you could get the papers I left at the jail," he said languidly as I finished.

"Will you stay here while I'm gone?" I asked.

"Yes, I'll rest. I'm very weak and tired;" and he closed his eyes.

I hesitated a moment, but as he said no more, started out, only to go a few blocks before I was stopped by the thought, "What if his cravings should overcome him!"

Meeting a small boy, I sent him, and hurried back. As I sprang up the front stairway, rapid steps descended at the rear of the hall. A glance into the vacant office convinced me that my fears were realized, and I hastened after the Major. The back door of the "Palace" stood open, and I rushed in only to see him before the long, polished bar, leaning forward, and, with outstretched hands, demanding: "Give me whiskey, quick, quick; give me whiskey!"

The white-aproned dispenser of death poured the drink from a long, black bottle, and handed it to the wild man. With a yell, I reached his side in time to dash the glass from his hand so forcibly as to send it across the bar into a large plate mirror, shivering it from top to bottom.

"Major Wright; are you crazy!" I exclaimed, grasping him by the arm. Then, not heeding a volley of oaths from the bartender, I turned, hoping to lead the surprised man away; but the honor of that high-toned inferno had been too deeply insulted to be passed over lightly, and the next instant a heavy wine-glass grazed my head and struck the Major above the ear, felling him to the floor.

Before the defender of Rum's sanctuary could escape, I grasped him by the collar and jerked him headlong over the bar; then, seeing the Major's pros-

trate body, I found a pail of ice water, and began bathing his bleeding head.

At this moment, the ponderous form of Col. Bray darkened the door, and, surveying the scene, he exclaimed:

"What's up now? Whose work is this?"

The obsequious servant hastened forward to explain, at which the man of high-licensed pomposity and power advanced toward me, with upraised cane, exclaiming:

"What did you strike him for, you villain? Get out of here!"

"Look out, Col. Bray," I said standing erect; "don't charge the villainy of your lackey to me."

"None of your trying to lie out of it. You've murdered the Major," he shouted: and his heavy cane descended so forcibly as to shiver it on my upraised arm, leaving little but the gold head in his hand.

Instinctively, acting on the 'first law of life,' I planted my foot in the center of his corporosity with such force as to double him up at the base of the bar.

"Police, Police!" shouted the bar-tender, rushing to the door: but I grasped him with more force than he relished, and seated him in a chair, with instructions to keep quiet.

Two officers entered, a moment later, and springing to his feet, the white aproned man exclaimed, pointing at me:

"There's the villain; he's murdered Major Wright and done up the Colonel!"

"What's the matter?" asked one, approaching where I was bathing the bleeding wound.

While I explained, the talkative drink-mixer gave the other officer his version. I discovered at once that the two were pretty "full," and my listener's incredulous look told where was the sympathy of the law's protectors. As I finished, he called to his companion:

"Mike, go for a doctor."

Col. Bray regained his feet, and between pain, cramps and oaths, joined in his bartender's condemnation of me as the only culprit.

In a short time the physician arrived, and as he examined the wound, said:

"What have you given him?"

"Nothing," I answered. "He is just over the tremens and mustn't have any alcohol. He is trying to break off."

"That doesn't matter; he must have some brandy," answered the doctor.

"Not while I'm here. I'm his friend and shall protect him," I replied.

"Then we'll take him where he has no fool friends to interfere," was the insulting retort, and all joined in a laugh.

The Colonel, after filling a glass, handed it to the physician.

"Gentlemen," I said, stepping before him, "there are five of you, but it will be costly for the man who attempts to give Major Wright any of that."

"Boys," exclaimed the Colonel angrily, "take the presumptuous fool to the lock-up. We haven't any use for him;" and the officers tried to obey.

Stepping back, I said: "Keep hands off. Col. Bray

can't sent me to jail and let his guilty servant escape. He is the one you would arrest, were you not political slaves."

But the officers were too reckless to heed my warning, and made a vigorous onslaught.

I knew that some one entered, but saw only my assailants, whom, with heavy blows, I sent reeling in opposite directions. Then seeing the doctor about to place a glass to the unconscious man's lips, I hurled him headlong toward the door.

CHAPTER XIII.

A REALISTIC DREAM.

My grasp upon the doctor was not in time to wholly thwart his purpose. Scarcely had the brandy touched the unconscious man's lips, when his eyes opened and he attempted to rise. Taking one arm, I was surprised to see Mr. Wightman assist on the other side. As we steadied him to his feet, he looked wildly around till he saw the white aproned waiter, when he exclaimed, beseechingly:

"Oh, do give me some drink!"

"No, Major; you have been hurt and must go home at once; come on," said the merchant, starting toward the door.

The injured man was too weak to offer resistance but groaning, said:

"I must have a drink; I'm dying for one glass. Oh, let me go just a moment!"

The officers had followed us to the walk, and as we placed the Major in a carriage, again tried to take me.

"No," said the merchant, emphatically, stepping in front of them; "I'll see that he is on hand whenever you need him. Better try your hand on the law-breakers inside;" and with a command to drive to the Major's, we left the city's gilded bar-room.

Passing by Dr. Bronson's office, Mr. Wightman took him in, and we were soon in the lawyer's private

library. When the wound was dressed, the former said:

"Now tell us how it all happened, Joseph. How did you come to be in The Palace?"

"Never mind how we got there," I answered, noting the look of shame and weakness on the Major's face. "That bartender became angry and threw a glass, but it missed me."

"I was so wild that I had gone there and was about to drink, when Mr. Strong rushed in and dashed the cup away, breaking a mirror;" interrupted the wounded man. "I *can't* let it alone for, I'm literally afire. If you were not here, I would go back if I had to crawl on my knees. I must have one glass."

"And kill your wife next time?" asked the doctor.

I shall never forget the look of pain that passed over his face at the question, but it was quickly followed by hard, hopeless lines, as he answered:

"No, I'd drink and die, or kill myself. I'm ruined, lost."

"Then we'll keep you here till you are a strong man again," said Mr. Wightman. "We need you and your wife needs you. Will you help us?"

"I can't help anybody, but I'll let you stand on guard if you'll drive off the devils who have bound me," was his hopeless reply.

"All right, then; we'll make them find other quarters," was the cheery answer. "Joseph will stay with you till night, and then I'll be on hand. Remember, I am depending on you;" and the merchant took his departure.

The afternoon was a wild one. Some times I re-

tained my prisoner only by superior strength. At times he pleaded for drink, and at others swore and cursed, rendered doubly frantic by the few drops that had passed his lips.

I was glad when I saw the merchant and doctor enter, in the early twilight, and with no reluctance, resigned my charge and hurried home, where Alice greeted me.

The evening meal was eaten under the charm of her bright eyes, and the hours slipped by unheeded. From the story of the day, we drifted on to deeper thoughts, and I learned that Alice Wightman was a prize far richer than I had dreamed.

The thoughts of the evening, colored by the events of the past few days, shaped my dreams, but in so wild and weird a fashion that I must relate them:

I was awakened, I thought, by strange sounds, as though, below the ground, men were hurrying along with clanking chains, laughing, jabbering and shouting in a demoniacal way. I went out to learn what it all meant, but seeing no one in our part of the city, hastened down town. The noise increased, till a turmoil seemed raging in the saloons. Suddenly the doors flew open, and from every den of vice, emerged a band of imps. With wild gesticulations and antics, they hurried away over the city, each carrying on his shoulder a pair of fetters and in his hand a cup of blood-red liquid.

I followed one troupe closely, curious to know their mission. No sooner were they started than they began sprinkling everything with the liquid, and the drops shone bright for a moment, then sank from sight.

Suddenly they halted in front of Mr. Wightman's store. The building, walk, and street to the center, glowed as though a furnace burned below.

"Try it," whispered one; and as a few drops fell upon the walk, they hissed and fried as though on a stove.

"Wipe it off or it will show tomorrow; he's a true enemy," commanded the leader.

When it was done, all passed around the glowing surface, and continued the march.

The Mayor, aldermen, police officers, judge and sheriff, received unusual attention, the imps mounting trees and buildings, and sprinkling everything with the Lethean liquid, some even entering the houses, that their work might be sure.

Thus the night wore on, other glowing walks, now and then, causing a tramp into the street. At such places, I thought I saw faces peering from the windows, as though the inmates were on guard.

Occasionally, on passing a hovel like Ben Pitt's or a palace like the Major's, some strong imp unloosed a pair of fetters and disappeared through a rent in the wall, only to return a moment later, unburdened and gleeful.

Reaching "Christ's church," a "file right" order was given, and the whole company stopped on the large stone steps. Then the door flew open, at the leader's knock, and all hurried in, scrambling over and under pews, into the gallery, organ loft, choir seats and prayer-room. Suddenly I heard a cry, and saw the leader tearing around in front of the pulpit. As I looked for the cause, I observed that the ros-

trum, pulpit, chair and bible glowed, and that he had carelessly wandered behind the sacred desk, leaving his foot-prints on the hot surface.

"I didn't expect it," he hissed, seating himself in a front pew. "It never was so before. Can it be that we have not given this pulpit enough attention, and the pastor proposes to be true to his Master? Don't fail to give the other pulpits more attention, hereafter, my men. It won't do to lose them. While they are kept quiet we are safe. And don't forget the pews. Charge them well to-night. Perhaps they may yet cool off *this* pulpit. If not, there'll be hot pews soon."

"There are some already," cried a little fellow, near by, and he emerged from Dr. Bronson's, with hands and feet well burned."

"And here's one too," cried another, in the aisle before Mr. Wightman's.

"And here's a hot choir-chair," cried a third.

"What-has-happened-to this church?" queried the leader. "Some Christian must have been awakened lately. The next thing will be a stir in politics. Strange how much trouble one wide awake disciple of the fearless Nazarene can make us. We've hard work on hand to stamp out this small insurrection. They'll be trying to save the drunkards and destroy the saloons, the first thing we know. We *must* have the help of the ministers, deacons and church members. *At least they must be kept quiet. License is impossible without them. Do you hear, my men? Mark well the courageous ones. Prepare to torture them. Now to the work!*"

For half an hour, the blood of the city's victims was applied to every nook and corner, pew, wall, organ, bell, bible and hymn book, till the imps laughed and danced in high carnival.

One church after another was visited, with seldom a hot pew, and no more hot pulpits. Here and there a little warmth was detected but not enough to trouble the workers, except to call for a heavier application of the conscience-stifler.

One little-plain-built church was passed, but everything about it glowed so that no one dared approach.

"Gone for good," said the leader. "They are few in numbers and poor, but there's no compromise or quarter in pulpit or pew. We tried for a long time to quench the growing fire, but the well worn bibles showed they had learned duty to God and love to men, and we gave it up. Since then we have striven to keep them ostracised, boycotted, and poor. *Don't fail, ye soldiers of darkness, to note any growing warmth. Keep the churches quiet!*"

The newspaper offices were reached, and everything examined.

"This is a cold old machine," said the leader, placing his hand on "The Herald's" large, power-press; "and the last edition is damp with the mildew of hell. Grand thing to have such sheets go into the homes of this city every day, Wet 'em down, ye true sons of the pit;" and in and out among the bales and boxes of paper, the faithful soldiers of Bacchus hurried, applying their cursed liquid to everything.

In "The News" office they lingered longer. "Things are a little warm here," said the leader. "The editor

evidently forgot himself and his duty to his party, in the last edition. There's a whole insurrection in it, if not quelled. Do your duty, my men."

As daylight touched the east, the troops hurried in. I followed my company through "The Palace" door and behind the bar, where we entered a dark passage. With hisses and hoots, the imps went rolling, tumbling and jumping downward. Suddenly we emerged into a mighty under-ground cavern, where were already assembled hundreds of similar troopers. Around the spacious room they ranged themselves, when at a command, each turned his face outward, doors in the wall flew open, and all sprang into the dark chambers. Then sounds, as of bones rattling, were heard, and the host returned, dragging a thousand skeletons with limbs gone, ribs broken, spines deformed, and skulls crushed, into the arena. Quickly they were ranged, by a curious framework, in compact ranks like an army; and then, as this ante-room of Hell grew quiet, the great Gambrinus shouted, in a voice that made the dripping walls echo and re-echo:

"Behold your work, ye conquering host! Death, Pestilence and Age are puny warriors, in comparison with you, ye legions of Bacchus and Gambrinus. Man is *now* thy *lawful* prey; but the day comes when the scepter shall be given to the Prince of Peace, and his kingdom shall redeem all hearts, lighten the dark places, break every fetter, and wipe away the last tear. Shout aloud, ye doomed victors, and curse man and God. Shout, I say!"

At this command, the demons yelled and hissed,

cursed and blasphemed, with the wildest fury of lost angels; and round and round, grasping the rattling skeletons of their victims in their hideous arms, they danced. At the commotion, I awoke.

CHAPTER XIV.

DRIVE ON YOUR BONE WAGON.

"Pretty near bed time, isn't it boys?" asked High Joe, as his listeners changed positions at the close of the dream.

"Never mind bed time, bejabbers. I'll sit up all night if you don't run down sooner," said Pat Kinney.

"You bet!" exclaimed the Yankee.

"Zee Frenchman likes ze wine, but ze serpent bites zare, too. I zinks I beez a demperance vanatic wen ze great story eze done. Go on, Monsieur; I eze awake vor tree hours more," was the voluble but earnest expression of the little Canadian.

"It is only a little after eleven, Joseph," said the Colonel, "but perhaps we would better wait until Saturday. I'll come over in the afternoon, if you will complete the story during the evening and next day? All will be glad to hear it. What do you say, boys?"

"We want the story as soon as possible," said a teamster.

"Yes, sir; before the kettle quits boiling!" exclaimed the cook.

"St. Patrick and the Virgin, but Oi'll be there!" broke in Pat.

"All right. I'll be on hand, if you think it worth listening to. I'm afraid you won't enjoy all I have

to tell. Good night, boys;" and High Joe started for his bunk.

There was something about the bearing of the man—his tall, erect figure, firm step, and air of self-control—that made all eyes follow him with admiration.

"He don't look as though he had any very sad story to tell about himself," remarked a gray-headed chopper.

"Naw," said the Yankee; "be a joke if he should 'sell' us."

"He ain't one of the 'sell' kind," said Pat.

"Ze deep water runs still, an' zee big heart eze like ze big oak wiz ze deep roots. Zay go below ze storms," remarked the Canadian, soberly.

"You are right, 'Frenchy,'" said the Colonel, as he rose to go; "he's genuine to the core and won't tell anything for effect. All he says, he has seen."

Quietly the company dispersed, a deep thoughtfulness resting on every face. To many, a new view of the nation's great evil had been opened, and it stirred hearts full of scars and sores from conflict with the tempter.

Among the first to turn out in the morrow's gray dawn, was High Joe. As he greeted the "boys," an air of conscious strength, at peace with the world and his own heart, breathed from every word and motion, and, at the head of the crew, he led the way to the "chopping," half a mile distant.

With none of the bluster and noise of his predecessor, the new foreman dropped his shining, long handled ax in the snow at the foot of a huge pine. As the

others halted, he said, laying off his corduroy roustabout.

"Boys, can I fell that giant in half an hour?"

"Guess yees can, boss," said Pat; "but no other man can."

"No matter; do your best boys," was the assuring answer, as he grasped his keen cutter, and half buried it in the pitchy pine, at one blow.

All understood the import of his words, and two score axes were soon ringing their chop, chop in the clear morning air. It was inspiring to these boys of the forest, as they stopped occasionally to breathe, and glanced admiringly toward the great tree, to see, unerring and steady, the foreman's blade making the yellow chips fly in showers.

Before the half hour had passed, a creak, a crack, and a "swish" were heard in quick succession, and the giant struck the earth so forcibly as to make all the neighboring trees tremble. Every ax was still as the victor wiped the perspiration from his brow, saying:

"I'll look after the teams now."

As he shouldered his ax and started toward the "skidways," a feeling of loyalty to the new leader and a determination to do his best, warmed every man's heart.

The days passed quickly and pleasantly, and toward sundown, Saturday evening, all were reminded of High Joe's promise, by the jingle of the Colonel's sleigh bells.

"Guess you boys better quit a little early to-

night," were the first words that greeted the choppers as the Colonel approached.

"How's the new foreman, Frenchy," he queried, as the little man looked up.

"He iz ze first class boss, ze dandy foreman," answered the impulsive fellow.

"You bet!" exclaimed the Yankee, approaching the sleigh.

"All right; glad to hear it. Guess you've done good work. Come on;" and the bells jingled merrily toward the camp.

"Good foreman, good men," remarked Pat, as they formed in double ranks and followed.

The supper was flavored with good things brought by the Colonel, and at seven o'clock, the room was cleared and packed with men, ready for the story.

The air was crisp without, and the sides of the long stove were red from a roaring fire. As the *chief* of the gathering took his seat, no sign indicated aught but the usual self-composure. Each read in his sober face and clear eyes a deeper desire than that of a mere story teller—as the Yankee had put it, "no yarner." Continuing the story, he said:

My dream was too vivid and the meaning of its incidents too deep to allow further sleep; accordingly I dressed and rambled forth in the gray dawn. Waiting at the saloon doors or going thither, I met more than a score of men after their morning "nip." "Poor fellows," I thought, "there's no help for you while saloons remain."

I knew their feelings or, as they say, "how the

hair pulls," when the influence of the evening's debauch begins to wear off. With a picture of bloated faces, bleared eyes, red noses and shambling footsteps before my eyes, I strolled on, till I was in front of Ben Pitts'.

Entering the dingy rooms, I found the anxious parents watching their bruised little ones. Each had become conscious, but, in spite of the doctor's dressing and medicine, was suffering severely. As I sat near the father and watched his sad, careworn face, I said:

"Brutal business, Ben, this liquor selling, no matter how high the license?"

"Brutal?" he queried, looking up savagely; "do you call that brutal?" and he pointed toward the broken bodies on the straw bed. "I call it devilish." Hell is waiting, hungry for the Judases who sell their fellows for such a price;" and he relapsed into silence.

After sitting a few moments, I went out, saying to myself: "If Christian men don't stop this terrible work soon, its victims will make a bloody hades of the boasted republic. Let Christian America beware, and that without delay."

Purchasing a morning Herald, I glanced over its associated press news—long political articles; two columns devoted to a prize fight; three divorce suits, disclosing the vileness of "fast" men and society women; two elopements, one a girl of rich parents with a colored hostler, and the other, a belle of fashion, wild with euchre parties and balls, with a noted gambler; and five murders by drunken or crazed men.

Among church announcements, was a call for all the deacons and trustees of Christ's Church to meet at three o'clock that day on *important* business.

"The homes of this city will soon be devouring these delectable dishes," I said with disgust; and crumpling the paper, threw it into the gutter.

I found the Major much improved and took Mr. Wightman's place.

"Can't we do some work to-day?" he began as soon as we were alone.

"If you are able," I answered.

"I must work, drink or go crazy. I'm pretty near a finished product of the city's licensed damnation. Strange, isn't it, what a difference there is between the fruits of Christian prayers and Christian votes. Converted men come from the first and drunken brutes from the last—a few converts and many sots. Joseph, I've got to have pretty strong help, if I succeed. Don't you want to enter my office and study law? I'll make it pay you well."

"I've been thinking that I would," I replied.

"All right then; we'll consider it settled," he remarked in conclusion, evidently much relieved.

Decending the stairs, half an hour later, the Major said:

"I must kiss my wife good morning. Pretty hard to need her help when I ought to be comforting and nursing her. She's brave, God bless her;" and tears stood in his eyes as he entered the sick room.

Strengthened by her smile and words of cheer, he joined us at the table, a few moments later, where a pleasant meal was brightened by the winsome Elsie.

The Major succeeded in resisting the craving appetite, and before night we were prepared for the Ben Pitts' hearing.

Alice was delighted with my plans, and I read, with do small pleasure, her interest.

"And you'll make your home with us?" she asked confidently.

"I shall as soon as the Major can spare me, unless you turn me away," I replied.

"We shall not turn you out if you don't get too tall for the doors. Father didn't build the house, you know, for giants;" and she laughed merrily as she looked up.

I returned to the Major's, after a delightful evening, and found him nervously walking the floor, his wife endeavoring to divert him by her cheery words. On reaching his room, he threw himself into a chair, exclaiming:

"O Joseph! it's a terrible battle. I would give ten dollars for a good glass of hot punch or whiskey straight. It doesn't seem possible to stand it!"

"But you've got to;" I answered. "We've set out to clear Ben Pitts and conquer your appetite. One glass of liquor would defeat both and ruin two families."

"That's so, but I can't do either alone," he said.

"We'll conquer by mutual help, and perhaps the hovel and the lawyer's home will each become a paradise," I replied hopefully.

"If they should, then we won't need to pay the priest when we die, for both will have traversed purgatory here. If Hell has any greater torture than

rum can inflict, 'twill be worthy the name of 'fire and brimstone.' I dont want to go as an explorer," he added.

I can't tell you how he suffered, but, with constant care, he grew stronger and more hopeful.

On the day of Ben Pitts' hearing, a crowd filled the court room, saloon men and their friends being present in large numbers. Workmen were on hand with Pitts, and so intense was the excitement that a word would have made the latter pitch the pompous Boss and his gang out of the window. The Major saw this and said:

"I shall make no defense. We'll have a jury trial soon and won't disclose our hand now. I wish you would explain to his friends."

I complied, and all agreed that the Major knew best. Accordingly, we let the state make its case, but such a cross examination as the three witnesses got would have won acquittal before any unprejudiced court.

The day was warm, and in the open windows sat a number of men. As the examination closed, and the Court, with little hesitation, found probable cause for committing the prisoner, a man in one of the windows said aloud:

"Another poor divil goin' to the calaboose. He's paid his share towards our high civilization, and now his carcass is useless. Drive on your bone wagon!"

"Mr. Sheriff, take that man in charge," exclaimed the Judge; but just then a stir was seen at the door, and a woman hurried breathlessly toward the front.

"Oh my God! that's Mary hunting for me; poor,—

sad—girl!" exclaimed the noisy man, standing up. Then he shouted like a madman:

"Gentlemen, I have just been turned loose from the beautiful home which you have fitted up so elegantly with bolts and bars, for all poor wretches when they have deposited their hard earned money in your modern banks and their manhood in your gutters. That's my wife."—

"O Peter!" cried the woman, reaching out her arms beseechingly. "Come home, for poor Benny is sick and I can't wash and iron. We're hungry and lonesome, Peter."

"No, Mary. Peter Mackin was robbed in the city's saloons, and then put in the calaboose for ten days when his bairns needed him. No one to bail him out, Mary; no one to see whether the poor divil was a baste or a man. Sixteen churches, Mary, and one hundred saloons, combined to rob, imprison and murder us. I drank up my last dollar as soon as I was out this morning, and my head feels so square, so wild," and he pressed his temples with his hands.

"O, Mary! I can't go home. Kiss the children, good-by, my dearest, my brave, patient, suffering swate-heart. Curse this city for me as long as you live. Curse its voters, its officers, its churches. Good-by, ye red-handed robbers!" and before the sheriff, who had been pushing his way thither, could grasp him, he turned, and with a crazy yell, jumped through the window toward the stone pavement, three stories below.

CHAPTER XV.

PICTURES FROM REAL LIFE.

The poor, tired woman, saw the fatal leap of her husband, and with a shriek, fell unconscious to the floor.

The crowd rushed to the windows or down the stairs, as soon as the first shudder of horror had passed, and there, crushed, bleeding and dead, his blood spattered over the broad walk and on the sides of the city's elegant Hall, lay all that was left of Peter Mackin. Two weeks before, he had started home full of hope and bright anticipations. In his pathway he found, not bandits, who, at the muzzle of a revolver, compelled him to surrender his hard-earned wages, but a beautiful city with broad streets, elegant business blocks, richly furnished homes, large school-buildings, a free library, costly city hall, and stores, warehouses, mills and banks, loaded with wealth. It was peopled with intelligent men and women, claiming to be civilized, but who, not willing to pay the expenses of such a city, themselves, had legalized dens of vice, traps of death, baited with the blighting serpent of the still, and furnished with doors opening wide upon the walks where human footsteps must tread. In this city, robbed of his money and crazed by drink, his bark of life had gone to pieces.

Kind hands bore the wife's frail, still form from the court-room, to a plain home across the street. The

pulse beat feebly, and the sunken cheeks and emaciated frame, told how little food had passed the thin, white lips. A doctor watched beside the cot, seeking to rally the ebbing tide, while tender hands smoothed out the tangled locks. The hours were few, the battle short, and Mary Mackin's tired, hopeless, broken heart stood still—another victim.

The coroner's work was quickly done, and the jury's verdict—suicide by *his own hand*—legally recorded; the messenger to his home, returned, saying two orphaned children, nearly starved, were found in barren rooms; the hearse, with a few mourners, bore the two crushed bodies to the Potter's Field; one grave received the coffins side by side; "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes" was said; the mocking tomb was closed; and once again was sealed a chapter in the bloody war with Rum.

I sent for Alice as I saw the wife moved, and during the time before the double burial, she was a sympathizing helper.

"Joseph," she said, when all was over, "I was asleep a month ago. Your words, that Sabbath by the brook, 'they have not been touched with the feeling of sympathy and love for suffering men,' opened a new vision to my eyes, a world in which I was its most selfish creature."

"You're getting ready to be a martyr, a reformer," I said with a smile.

"Seriously, do you think so?" she queried.

"Oh no, I was only joking. I hope no lot of sorrow awaits Alice Wightman," I answered, looking with admiration into her sweet eyes.

Picking up a paper, the smile on her face faded as she asked:

"Did you read the account of that church meeting?"

"No," I answered, "I overlooked it in the rush of other matters. Read it."

She complied, and this is what The Herald said:

"AS IT SHOULD BE.

The meeting at Christ's Church yesterday, made short work of Politics in the Pulpit. Minister Bliss, who so far forgot himself the Sabbath before, was heavily sat down upon by the trustees. It's 'no politics or no pulpit,' hereafter. Deacon Johns deserves the thanks of the church for his square, courageous stand. Now let the pastor stick to his Bible, if he cares for his bread and butter."

The News said:

"SOUNDING BRASS."

"Pastor Bliss was brought before a politico-church sanhedrim, yesterday. After Deacon Johns tapped the meeting to order with his goldheaded cane, he explained the 'serious matter' they were called upon to consider. 'For one,' he said, 'I cannot consent to have the sacred work of the church and its best interests jeopardized by such sermons as our pastor preached last Sabbath. The gospel is strong enough to convert and save all men who are predestined to salvation. What it can't save, politics can't, laws can't. Men have a right to become cranks on the liquor evils, but it's out of place in the pulpit, and won't be allowed.' Others spoke in a similar vein,

while the good pastor, sitting calmly in the rear, listened. Finally the chairman asked: 'Have you anything to say Brother Bliss?' 'Only this,' was the quiet response, but it came like a thunder-clap; 'no man nor devil can muzzle my mouth. My commission is from the Almighty.'

"The trustees were evidently not ready to give the pastor his walking papers, and there was too much concealed fire in his answer to make a longer meeting desirable. The sounding brass and tinkling cymbals adjourned, much rattled by the vigor of the consecrated man's courage. We wait developments, but bet on the one man of backbone."

High Joe returned two slips to his pocket, and, as the others moved slightly, the enthusiastic Pat exclaimed:

"Be-jabers, I'll bet on him, too. It ain't wise to fool with guns loaded with sich dynamite; somethin's loikly to bust."

After the laugh went round at Pat's remark, High Joe continued:

"Sounding brass and tinkling cymbals!" I exclaimed as she finished. "They're a disgrace to Christianity, a set of whited-sepulchers."

"Don't be too hard on them, Joseph," Alice said, laying down the paper. "They are blind, as I was. Have you heard that Deacon Johns' son was drunk last night, poor fellow?"

"No, but I am not surprised," I answered. "When his own son is struck by the destroyer's heavy hand, he may awaken. I trust it won't be too late."

The days passed rapidly. The Major's appetite was

a consuming fire. From a heavy frame, he wasted away, till the leading physician in the city told him he would die, unless he stopped the craving by a moderate use of beer.

"I'd be a lost man," exclaimed he, "were I to indulge in one glass. How can you doctors close your eyes to the power of appetite in men like me, and advise our taking the destroyer as medicine? Is your profession so near a failure that the only remedy you can prescribe for fire is fire? Doctor, you have ruined others by such advice, but I shall resist if appetite don't overcome me."

Work crowded in and we were very busy. I enjoyed the days and especially the preparation for Ben Pitt's trial. More than all, however, I enjoyed the hours of converse with Alice Wightman. With the freedom, almost, of brother and sister, we visited, sailed, and drove. My plans were freely discussed, while she, with naive confidence, disclosed her highest thoughts and aspirations.

Without a word of bitterness, the courageous pastor pushed on his work. Deacon Johns and others remained from prayer-meeting for some weeks, but those who attended declared that the good pastor had never seemed so brave and gentle, so earnest and hopeful. The sermons, too, had a higher, grander ring, as though inspired by a new power and purpose. Instead of seminary theology he preached every-day, Christ theology; instead of ancient crusades and martyrs, he told of the modern crusades and martyrs—America's needs and workers.

"He doesn't say saloons, or license, or politics," re-

marked a gentleman one Sunday as the crowd was pushing out, "but I know he means it, just the same. When the proper time comes he won't slide round, I'll guarantee. Men with number twelve boots and number six hats can't dictate his thinking or speaking."

Colonel Bray overheard the remark and looked around savagely at the stranger, but as the door was reached, I heard no more.

Three glorious months of fragrant, fruitful summer passed. Circuit Court convened, and early in the session the criminal calender was called. In its regular order, the Ben Pitts case was reached, and the crowded court-room told how great was the interest.

"Mark my word," said the Major, as we were waiting for court to open; "public sentiment and sympathy in the city is divided. The line cuts right through the snobs, the society rich, and the euchre-playing, dancing church-members, leaving most of them on the side of Col. Bray and his dead subaltern. The workmen, farmers, and men and women of strong purpose, will side with the defendant."

"Won't that make it difficult to get a jury?" I queried.

"I fear it will," he answered. "My only hope is in the farmers on the panel. There are good business men, too, but many of them have no backbone. They fear to sit on a jury, to attend caucuses and conventions, work for good men before or after the nominations, vote their conviction for or against men or measures, or remonstrate against bad laws or petition for new ones, lest they offend some one.

Many a man will trade the interests of his city, the character of his own or his neighbors' boys, the American love of justice and fair play, the sacred interests of church and school, and the bodies and souls of men, all for the profits on a ton of coal, a suit of clothes, or a job of work. I don't say they purposely plan these things, but they grow, little by little, to shirk every serious, public duty where anyone is liable to differ from them. We who are lawyers, or who have been in politics, know how true this is. America's sovereignty gets sold out pretty cheap, and men born in other lands become our masters."

"I fear you're putting that pretty strong," I answered.

"Strong," he said emphatically, looking at me with keen, deep eyes, "can you tell me how come all of our aldermen, nearly all of our policemen, most of our city officers, half of that jury panel, nearly every ward inspector of our elections, assessors, highway commissioner and all employees, to be foreign born? Joseph, it's a serious matter. Watch as we draw the jury."

Court opened and our case was called. As Ben Pitts, with sober face, took his place, Col. Bray's ponderous form came in with the district attorney. Deacon Johns, stroking his silk hat, greeted the Colonel as he passed, and all classes were well represented.

The day was consumed in getting a jury. One after another of the panel was examined, till every business man was excused, because he had "formed an opinion as to the guilt or innocence of the prisoner."

"Didn't I tell you so?" questioned the Major, as the last one stepped aside. "Very few had any opinion but fear or selfish interests. All have evaded duty."

Numerous talesmen from the city were brought in with similar results, and toward evening the sheriff started for the country.

The next day, a jury of intelligent farmers was completed, and the trial began. The state had a larger number of witnesses than before, and the fresh ones told plausible stories; but the Major's scathing cross-examination made havoc with them. His bony hand, as he shook it, seemed to have a ghost-like power of compelling them to admit the truth.

Ben Pitts was there with his wife and little ones. Neither child could walk or get in or out of a chair. When the state rested he was called, and as he put down the boy to take the stand, the little fellow cried out in pain.

"Now tell the jury your story, Ben," said the Major as the witness was sworn; "they want all of it."

Just then the child, trying to move himself, cried out again, and the father placed his handkerchief to his face to hide the falling tears.

"I haven't much of a story, gentlemen," he began as soon as he could control his voice. "I was a hard workin' man and lived in a good house with my wife and two little children, till those new saloons started near the shops. I learned to drink when a young man, but had been sober and industrious for ten years, saved five hundred dollars, and was planning to buy a home of my own. I stepped in with the other

boys one night and took a drink as Pat Moran's treat. It aroused the old appetite, and before I knew it—it didn't take a week—I had spent and gambled all of my savings at his den. I was soon a sot, and we had to move to a miserable hovel and sell our furniture to live through the winter. I owed Pat quite a bill for whisky, and he had threatened to fix me if I didn't pay. He was pretty cross that evenin' and I gave him a dollar bill my wife had earned that day, washin'. He cursed and swore when he saw how small it was, but just then one of the new fellows called us all up for a treat. Then we sat down to play cards, and hadn't played long when the children came in. I was mad with whisky, mad 'cause Pat had talked so to me, and mad to see the children look so hungry and ragged; but I pulled my hat down, thinkin' he'd send 'em out an' I'd follow. Just then I heard them say: 'Is our pa here?' and I listened to see what Moran would say, but I didn't expect anythin' half so bad. 'No; get out o' here, you d——n ragged brats,' he shouted. Then the baby girl said so sweet like that I almost jumped up. 'Ma said he was here.' "

The witness broke down and could say no more for some minutes.

"Then, O gentlemen! Pat Moran rushed out—I can see that sweet face yet—and—kicked her—with his heavy boot—so hard she never made a sound—and I thought—he had killed her.—"

"We'll take a five minute recess," exclaimed the judge, as he saw the many handkerchiefs in use through the room, and slipped out using his own.

CHAPTER XVI

A TELLING SPEECH.

When court called and the witness took the stand, a solemn stillness pervaded the room. He continued:

"I jumped up so wild and angry that I don't know what I did, only I remember seein' little Ben swung over Pat's head, and—heard—him—cry—as the brute—threw him. I know I felt awful wicked when I saw him kick my baby Katie so, and I think you would, too, gentlemen. I don't know what I did next till I remember havin' her in my arms, but somethin' said I had done right. That is my story gentlemen. I am sorry that I killed Pat. Moran, but I never meant to and never would, if he hadn't done such a deed. Most every time I see those little cripples, I curse myself for drinkin', and Pat. Moran for sellin', and this city for licensin' him. There's ten men, since the saloons started near our shops, that's gone to the bad, one way or 'nother. Tom Moore shot his wife and run off 'fore the police got him——"

"I object to any more of that," exclaimed the district attorney.

"Yes, I think it is immaterial whether ten or forty men went to the bad," remarked the court, harshly.

"What!" exclaimed the Major, rising and eyeing the judge savagely. Then shaking his bony finger at the court, while every word cut with sarcasm, he added: "Does your honor wish to place on record a

statement—a deliberate holding of the court—that a ruin or murder of forty men by the same powers that made a brute of this man, is of no consequence now? That when one of ten victims, turns and rends the legalized destroyer, and is tried as a felon, he cannot show how he got such a brutal heart? Does your honor—wish to hold—that we can't show—Pat. Moran a wholesale betrayer? I insist, sir, that the witness finish his story. It may not flatter his city, our boasted civilization, nor the well-fed, happy-go-lucky citizens who assisted in starting this Hellward game; but its truth—bare, cold truth, that this court is after, unless your honor adopts the same excuses that the voters did. I admit that it is just as wise and reasonable to close the eyes now as then, but also just as wrong."

No one could help seeing that the court winced under such a fire, but he only said:

"The witness may go on, but be short."

"Go on, Ben," said the Major, sitting back in a satisfied way, and the witness proceeded:

"Bill King was a splendid fellow, but he hadn't been married many months when he began to drink. He drove his wife out in the cold, and she and her little babe died from the exposure. Then Bill hung himself in jail.

"Hank Jones, in a drunken craze, jumped off the bridge into the river and never was found.

"That's the way they went, gentlemen,—shootin', hangin', drownin',—an' more'n a dozen others have died or been killed by them or their ways. I might

o' been one if that Moran hadn't done such a deed,—an' that's only the work o' four saloons."

"If they're so bad, why don't you fellows keep away?" asked the court contemptuously.

"Judge, if I had it, I'd give a farm if some one would show me how. I don't want to drink but I've got the appetite; an' when a man has that, he's a goner. Mighty few, Judge, that quit. They're the fellows that pay the money to support the saloons. One hundred couldn't live long, if they depended on the stingy fellows who walk in an' take a drink an' then go out. It's the fellows what treat an' stay an' drink, that fattens saloon-keepers and pay big licenses. Them's the facts, Judge."

"You may take the witness," said the Major.

"So you admit that you're a regular bum?" began the District Attorney.

"Guess I'm 'bout through the city's schools,—liable to graduate to the Potter's Field most any day," came the curt reply.

"And spent much money in Moran's saloon?"

"Spent five hundred dollars and all I earned for most a year—five hundred more."

"And the other fellows spent all they had, same as you did?"

"No, they spent some, but Moran robbed most of it."

"Robbed; what do you mean?"

"Just what I say. All saloon-keepers or some of their men do. You needn't open your eyes so, 'cause I know and Col. Bray knows, too. He couldn't run The Palace a day on the profits from what he sells."

The Colonel swore in an undertone, and the prompt attorney sprang to his feet with a violent objection.

"I can't save you from the witness if you insist on asking such questions," remarked the court, much amused, while the prosecutor, seating himself crest-fallen, said:

"That is all."

Other witnesses followed, corroborating Ben, and then I took the stand. My story was short, but I could see how uneasy the Colonel was before I closed; in fact I knew, as I stood in the witness stand to take the oath, that the prosecution was much surprised, and the audience looked for something unusual. Among the sea of faces that crowded the room, I caught a smile from Alice Wightman's; and as I finished, she waved her handkerchief in approval.

The testimony closed, and after an opening argument by the state's counsel, Major Wright addressed the jury. 'Twas a speech long to be remembered. For an hour he reviewed the evidence and closed by saying:

"The murder, gentlemen, was of a brutal seller, by a besotted drinker; and we who voted for license made it all possible. There's death in the cup, always has been and always will be; death to conscience, to justice, to innocent wives and children, and to guilty sellers and drinkers. It scorches like a sirocco, wherever its poisonous breath touches. The only wonder is, gentlemen, that Ben Pitts had enough love left to avenge his child's brutal treatment. You or I, or any man with a heart, would have done the same. He was either justified or you

must find that the right to outrage a drunkard's family is a part of the municipality's mighty endowment, when it removes the law's strong prohibition and accepts bribe money from known murderers. Will you, can you, say Ben Pitts is guilty? Your verdict may, but your consciences cannot. You are now asked to turn the last wheel in the law's infamous mill. Legislators have made the plans and built the hopper; Christian voters have put it in place, taken the high-license toll and turned on the power; a grist of eight bodies and souls was in the hopper this time; one is dead, two are crippled for life, a wife is husbandless, and two children are fatherless; a mother is mourning in disgrace and poverty over her bruised babes; and the last one, besotted, maddened by drink, and outraged, has killed a fellow man. He now stands at this bar for vindication or for punishment. One more turn of the mill, as it has been grinding, and the maw of the insatiable crusher will be ready for a new grist. God Almighty can't undo the bloody work, and you can only stop the last wheel before it drops this broken fragment through the prison door. Will you do it?

"You have heard to-day what four saloons can do and have done. Those who were in the municipal court-room ten days ago, and saw the delirium devils chase Peter Mackin out of the window in a headlong leap into a drunkard's eternity, or followed him and his heart-broken wife in wooden boxes to the Potter's Field, know what other saloons can do. 'Tis the old, old story, gentlemen, sad and bloody. While it

goes on by our leave, we laugh and sing, buy and sell, thank God that we live in 'the land of the free and the home of the brave', and then close our eyes in satisfaction and our ears with pleasure, at the music of our boasted civilization. Of you, O men of hearts, I ask but one thing: If, with all his guilt and drunkenness, Ben Pitts was only acting as the highest impulse of humanity dictates, or if he was besotted by Pat Moran's whiskey and crazed by his outrage, when he stamped the brutish heart to death, I ask you to set him free; nay, gentlemen, I demand it; justice demands it. When the last sad record in this blighting conflict is penned, when the great books on high are closed, when voter, seller and drinker stand at that higher bar, and when we all await, not as counsel or jury, but as men with hearts, for the verdict of the Judge of all the Earth, then, gentlemen, shall the scroll of God unroll, and, in eternity's revealing light, we'll read this chapter, ending with your verdict; then shall the finite be measured by the infinite, the human by the divine; then shall justice be tempered with mercy, and the Prince of Life say to trembling hearts with dark, sin-stained records; 'Neither do I condemn thee; go in peace.' Gentlemen, mercy pleads, but justice demands that you say to Ben Pitts, 'neither do we condemn you; go and sin no more.'"

As the passionate plea swelled upward, I felt I could read the verdict in the spell-bound eyes of the jury and the suppressed feeling of the audience. The state's counsel followed, the Judge's charge was given, and twelve men retired to sit in judgment.

A half hour passed, when a loud rapping on the jury's door bespoke an agreement. With solemn step they returned, and in response to the court's question, handed their verdict of "not guilty."

As the sheriff adjourned court, friends rushed forward to congratulate both the Major and his client. The pompous Colonel disappeared, followed by his dark-souled cohort, and soon only a score or two remained.

As the "Boss" left the court-room, I caught the remark:

"D—n him, I'll fix him yet."

I knew it boded no good, but was unable to tell to whom he referred.

The Major was scarcely able to start home, he was so weak and exhausted. I was alarmed as I helped him down, but was rejoiced to find that Alice, with her womanly tact, had a team for us at the door.

"Don't leave me to-night, Joseph," said the Major, as we whirled away. "I am almost wild for drink. 'Tis fearful."

I assured him of my concern, and Alice said simply, as she bade us good night:

"You care for the attorney and I will for the clients."

The buoyant Elsie opened the door, and we were greeted by the wife to whose cheeks something of the old color was returning. Deep in her eyes, however, behind the smile of hope, I saw a haunting fear, a lurking pain; but with the sacrifice of loyal womanhood, she strove to put it all aside.

The account of the trial in "The Herald," scored

the jury as "a pack of perjured poltroons who were either bribed, intimidated or caught by sentiment."

"The News" said: "The value of the jury system was never better illustrated than in the Ben Pitts trial, when court, counsel and officers seemed biased and ready to condemn the accused. We believe the verdict was a wise and just conclusion."

Some whispered, before the next Sabbath, that Pastor Bliss would use the incidents of the trial as an excuse for a red-hot temperance sermon. Some said he ought, and others said he wouldn't dare. The result was that almost as deep an interest was aroused as over the Pitts trial.

Under Alice's care, the cripples soon began to laugh and hobble gleefully about, and the father returned to his work. In a few weeks, through the magic hand of steady employment and temperate living, the rags gave way to comforts, and soon a new home was found for the laborer's family.

"I'll never drink again," was Pitt's promise to his wife; and, as the days went by, he seemed to have formed his purpose so deep in sorrow that it would last.

As I appeared at the breakfast table, Saturday morning, I detected a sober look on every face.

"What's happened to make you all so solemn?" I asked, not daring to banter them.

Alice answered by handing me a moist copy of "The News." Glancing at a marked article, I read:

"A TRIPLE MURDER.

"Dick Claire went home full of drink last night but wanting more. He found his daughters, Maud and

Mert, busy sewing, and demanded some of their money. They refused, and after swearing and threatening, he went off, as they supposed, to bed. Suddenly, however, he opened the door and rushed at them with a hatchet. Before Maud could get out of her chair, he struck her such a blow as to crush in her skull and kill her on the spot. Mert tried to flee but he pursued, striking her with the sharp edge in the back as she passed through the door, completely severing three ribs from the backbone; she cannot live. His last act was to cut his own throat from ear to ear.

"So ghastly was the scene that not one of a half dozen men who entered before the coroner, could remain in the room. 'Crazy drunk' or 'snakes in his boots' will probably be the verdict. The heart stands still a moment, in horror, and then we pass on."

CHAPTER XVII.

A CONGRESS OF NATIONS.

As I finished reading the horrible butchery, I asked:

"Who were Maud and Mert Claire? It seems to me I've heard the name?"

"You have," answered Alice. "On your first Sabbath at church here, you remember asking who those two sweet-faced girls in the choir were?"

"I remember them well. Can it be possible that they are the victims?"

"Yes, they've now added their lives to other sacrifices. Friends urged them to find employment elsewhere, but they loyally stayed with their father, earning enough in a large factory to buy the bare necessities of life. He grew more brutal, and lately pawned Maud's new spring suit. Often he stole a whole week's wages and they had to suffer, sometimes even receiving blows and kicks. It's all over now, for rum has finished its work."

"He, poor, embruted sot, has gone to meet the wife who died in sorrow years ago, because of his drunkenness," said Mr. Wightman.

"No, not to meet her," remonstrated Mrs. Wightman. "I don't believe he could endure life in any place where she or her dear murdered girls are. This city manufactures drunkards for this life and lost souls for the next."

The few friends of a once successful business man made the preparations for the burial, while the busy

world moved on, thoughtless of its part in the bloody drama.

"There's to be a meeting of the saloon men and their friends this afternoon, I understand," remarked the Major as we started for dinner. "Suppose you drop in and listen."

I promised to do so, and, at three o'clock, was in a tough looking crowd. The "Boss" was elected chairman and opened the meeting by stating that its object was to plan for the evening caucus. He closed by saying:

"We've got to protect our business; self-preservation is the first law of life. We must be saloon-keepers first and party men last. In union there is strength. If both parties nominate men who are satisfactory to us, we must help each. The first thing is to be at the caucuses early and elect the right men to the county convention. I want to impress upon every saloon man the importance of seeing the men who are running politics or looking for office, and give them to understand, decidedly, that they can count on our help, only on one condition—they must nominate our friends; that we'll 'kick' the moment they don't. We won't have any milk and water sops; they've got to be clean cut."

As the Colonel sat down, he was roundly cheered, and a portly German followed.

"Meester shairman," he began; "I vas vor ber-so-nel liberty virst und vor bo-liti-cal liberty last. I vas a schloon-geepeer virst und a re-boob-li-can last. I knows nottings mooch about bolitics or vie I vas a rebooblican, only dat I vas, so long ash dey brotect

mine pizness. Ven dey doon't, I vas a dem-i-crat poorty quick. I vas a temp'rance man but I doon't vant it in bolitics; I vants pizness dare, und I vants men elected who knows vat pizness in bolitics is. Breachers und Zundy school men, und deekuns vas all right ven you gets der ticket nomoonated. Ve vant to see to dot und ven ve haf doon it, dey vill vote so quick as nothings, off ve poot der right name at der top. Ve vas too sharp vor sooch vel-lows. It moost make me schmile out loud ven I tinks how ve can vool dem. Schentlemens, I vas no schpaker, so I vill sot me down. "

"Begorra," began a burly Irishman, rising, "I agree with the Colonel and our friend Krout. We can have our own way and nominate our own friends if we will. It needs care and common sinse, but we've got both. I'll trust the Colonel to manage so slick that the other fellows will think they've done it."

One after another spoke, declaring for business first and party second. At last a little Frenchman who kept a low dive, got the floor, and in a fiery way exclaimed:

"Ze great United States of Amerigo iz ze plaze to keep ze zaloons. Ze young men drinks ze fastest an' spenz ze most money of any in ze world. I haf keep zaloon most everywhare, boot zis iz ze land of ze vree. No bolezeman trouble ze zeller and he can zell to ze poy, ze trinker, ze childers, on ze Zunday, un on ze election day. Zen he can haf billiard tablez, ze witchin cards, ze faro, ze roulay, ze scarlet woman, ze anyzing to get ze money of ze voolish

peoplez. An ze churches, ze priests, ze great literati zmile and votes to give ze license vor ze part off ze money. Zhentlemen I vas broud of ze vree goontry. I vaz broud of ze great parties; za gif us all ve ask. I loves zem both zo mooch zat I cannot tellz vich to votz vor. I tinks I vill help ze two."

At the close of the meeting resolutions were adopted pledging each to vote and work against any man who did not promise to do all he could to advance their interests; and after a warning from the chairman, not to let the grass grow under their feet, they dispersed.

As they crowded out, I detected German, Irish, French, Italian, Pole, Russian, Scandinavian, and almost every nationality, represented in the army of slow murderers. Their thick necks, bloated faces, coarse features—scarred, bruised and lustful—all told the kind of men we were "regulating."

As the last vicious eye glanced at me and disappeared, I strolled out, saying half aloud:

"And these are the men to whom voters are selling a privilege that makes men worse than the heathen."

Just then a familiar hymn flashed into my mind, with two words changed, and I hummed slowly:

"From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand,
Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand;
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Our land to error's chain."

After a short pause, while the strange transformation of thought startled me, I murmured:

"O Consistency, Consistency! whence hast thou fled? While thou art gone, I'll propose a new plan for evangelizing the world. I'll ask the license devotees to petition for a change in the law, so that, instead of all the money going into the city treasury for worldly purposes, it shall be divided, paying a part into the church treasury for foreign missions; and while, with the bloody fees, we build royal roads at home, we may also 'cast up a highway' for the benighted heathen. What a royal scheme that would be! Business men would vote for it because of the city revenues, while church members would support it because of the church revenues. Wouldn't it catch the rich pew owners! They could stop the tax-gatherer and the collection box."

My feelings had changed with the growth of sarcasm, and I laughed aloud at the thought.

As chance would have it, the first man I met was Deacon Johns. The smile was still on my face as I caught his eye, and with a dignified bow as he stopped to shake hands, he said:

"Joseph, what amuses you so?"

I related my scheme, and was still more amused by his serious look.

"My boy, you make too light of these things," he answered, trying to pass.

"No, Deacon," I said, stepping in his way, "I want an answer. Is it any worse to put the license money into the church than into the city treasury? If it is right to take it, isn't it right to put it where it will

do the most good? and if it is wrong to apply it to buy bibles for the heathen and teach them the way of righteousness, isn't it wrong to apply it to our highways? Deacon, haven't we been measuring our voting by a political creed and our giving by a church creed? Suppose we should square them both by the Almighty's plummet,—His great "word of light;" don't you think both would undergo a marked change?"

"I am not accustomed to such catechising and you will excuse me," he said; but Alice, who had approached unobserved, blocked the way.

"Are you used to catechising *yourself*, Deacon, on this great question?" I insisted, enjoying his discomfiture.

"You are becoming too fanatical to talk reasonably," he answered bowing and stepping past!

As we sauntered down town, I related all that had occurred, and found a most interested listener in Alice.

"You are a strange fellow," she remarked, laughingly, as I finished. "Your inventive genius must date back to the Mayflower."

At an early hour, crowds gathered at the several caucus rooms. The saloon forces were boisterous and ready for "pizness." Here and there was a business man, but in the rush, when the doors were opened, few got in.

At last the farce was over, the delegates were selected, and while the "respectable men" went home, the office seekers and crowds sought the sa-

loons. Drinks flowed freely and all went merry in the "modern hell."

Foremost among the treaters, was the man anxious to be sheriff and the man aspiring to the legislature. Foremost among the drinkers were the men whose votes could be purchased for a glass of beer. Foremost among the sellers were the men who were purchasing both treaters and drinkers. Conspicuous for their absence, were the men who advocated license in order to "regulate" saloons,—men who were always apologizing for their own conduct and the dirty work they were sanctioning.

"O Liberty, thou art undone and fled to brutish hearts, twice brutalized!" I exclaimed, as I jostled through the crowds going in and out of the open doors.

Suddenly a cry of "fire! fire!" was heard, the bells sounded their alarm, and before I knew it, I was near the burning building which proved to be "The Palace." The coming crowd pushed on and, though the fire was pouring through the roof, we were driven closer.

"Back, stand back!" shouted the policemen; as the engines began to play upon the roaring flame. "Back; back for your lives; the walls will fall in a few moments!"

A panic spread, and men, women and children pushed and trampled one another in frightful shape. Suddenly the roof fell, the great red tongue shot up a hundred feet, the wall trembled, swayed, and, oh horrors! it was falling toward us.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FIRES WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

The crowd was warned just in time, and, had nothing fallen but the wall, few would have been hurt; but along the top were two large chimneys which, as they fell, reached out toward the fleeing forms. There was no time for thought. A crash, a tremble of the earth, a cry of pain, and I knew no more, for a flying brick struck me to the ground.

When I recovered, someone had administered brandy and the old appetite was aroused. I was soon removed to Mr. Wightman's and learned that the fire was burning on, fanned by a rising wind.

Christ's Church was some blocks away, but before any one could get to the high belfry, that, too, was on fire, and soon the sacred walls were wrapped in flames.

For several days I fought the thirst for drink, nerved to greater resistance by the tender care of my watchers, and on several occasions, almost decided to tell them; but something whispered, "Not yet; fight it out alone."

Feeling much improved on the third day, I started for the office. Stopping before the smouldering ruins, I murmured:

"Thank God, there's one less place to tempt men. Oh, that a fire would sweep them all away!"

After surveying matters a few moments, I reached the office and found the Major at work. To him I

told everything, and how, even then, I was being tortured.

"Can it be possible!" he exclaimed, "that while you have been helping me, you have carried a smouldering volcano."

"Yes," I answered, "but how are you?"

"I am improving, but when I try to pass a saloon, something like an unseen power within seems to draw me," was his answer; "but have you heard how the fire originated?"

Assuring him that I had not, he continued:

"Colonel Bray has been running a first class gambling den over The Palace, ever since it started. The only way to reach it was by the inside stairway; but, though not very winding, I am told that many a man went up to his ruin. On that evening, several men were gambling, when one fellow who had lost heavily, became so enraged that he assaulted another and, in the melee, a lamp was overturned and the fire started. As a result, over twenty thousand dollars worth of property was destroyed, five lives lost, several persons crippled, and the old appetite rekindled in you. That's the way it pays everywhere. I never thought much of it until lately. Strange how blind and heedless we are."

We closed the day's work and started home. After going several blocks, the Major said:

"If you don't need me I'll go to see a witness in a new case."

"I'll be all right," I answered confidently, and passed on alone.

Before I had gone far, however, I found myself standing before a saloon. The two large doors were swung wide open, the screen removed, and from the damp sidewalk and saturated sawdust in the gutter, the reeking odors filled the air. In the door stood the white-aproned waiter, with his room ready for the evening's work.

"Come in, come in," he said in the blandest of tones as he saw my indecision.

Reason uttered no protest, in fact, had little time to. I know not how or why I entered, only that I seemed drawn in as by a spell, and but one glass was needed to drown the voice of conscience.

How much I drank, I know not, except that some-time later, I was aroused by a touch on my arm, and discovered Ben Pitts, sober and astonished, looking at me. My breath told the whole story, and he said, anxiously:

"What you doing here, Mr. Strong? Won't you go home with me?"

"Oh, I'm all right, I'm all right Ben," I answered with much of the maudlin in voice and laugh. Then rising, I added: "Come and have a drink, Ben; come on."

"No, no, Mr. Strong. You know what it has cost me. If I get started once more, I'm a gonner. You come with me;" and grasping my arm he urged me toward the door; but the man of "pizness" didn't propose to have his customers interfered with, and shouted with an oath:

"Let him alone, Ben Pitts, or I'll break your

head"; and he flourished a large bottle with the evident intention of throwing it.

The workman was too brawny and brave a fellow to be scared by the milk-sop, and squaring himself about, shook his fist at the coward, exclaiming:

"Throw your bottle, you —— villain, if you dare, and I'll wring your neck! I'd shoot you for the price of a yellow dog."

The 'bluffer' concluded not to interfere, so he contented himself with swearing, while my determined friend led me away.

A few moments later, we entered Ben's home and found the little cripples playing happily on clean floors, and dressed in tidy clothes, while the wife's face had grown many years younger. She understood my condition at once and, in spite of her sympathy, the old hard lines again marred her features. As she brought me a cup of coffee and a hearty lunch, I could not help noting her set teeth, quick, suppressed breathing, and a fire in her eyes that boded evil to some one.

Though my brain was dull and my tongue thick, what I saw sobered me. Could the women, in comfortable homes and pleasant surrounding, feel what that woman felt, as she lived over the wretched past made vivid by the present, they would cease to allow their hands to be tied by ease, social standing, or their husband's politics, and would join in the holy crusade for homes and humanity.

After considerable urging I consented to try one of Mrs. Pitt's "new beds," and soon forgot everything in a troubled sleep. Early in the evening I was aroused by Ben with a message that the Major

wanted to see me. At the mention of his name, I realized my weakness and shame, and dreaded to meet him; but the warm grasp of his hand and his "Joseph, I want you to go home with me," told his friendship and interest. I went with him and soon we were in his library.

"It won't do, Joseph," he began; "you helped me up and I must help you. I want you to go with me to the convention to-morrow, and we'll give the 'gang' particular fits. They've captured the city, but I propose to enlighten the fellows from the country. If I can't beat the rascals, no one can."

I consented to help, if possible, and retired while the Major sent word to Mr. Wightman's.

That night was one of struggle, and more than once, could I have gotten out, I would have rushed off for drink. Toward morning I was aroused by the vigorous ringing of fire-bells.

"You be still and I'll see where it is," said the Major, looking in.

Returning an hour later, he answered my question by saying:

"It was Crocker's saloon. They say some one set the fire and the mayor has offered five hundred dollars to catch the culprit. 'Twas done with an evident intent that it should not be put out."

"They won't catch him," I remarked with assurance, believing I knew the fire-bug. "Whoever did it, was probably paying off some old score."

As I was dressing in the morning, feeling weak and miserable, the Major entered. His first words, after a cheery greeting, were:

"They've arrested Ben Pitts, and he has sent for me to defend him. Tell me all you know, Joseph."

CHAPTER XIX.

MEN WHO SELL US OUT.

In a few words, I told the Major what I knew of the trouble in the saloon, and he left me, saying:

"I guess they'll slip up this time."

We were delayed by work in court till ten o'clock, when the judge discharged the prisoner, and we started for a ten mile drive. Rapidly we traversed the fertile hills and valleys waving with abundant crops, till we came in sight of the village.

"I'm afraid the 'ring' will be ahead of us," said the Major, "but I never felt more like war than to-day. Our first work will be to 'feel' of the farmers. I want you to do your best and report soon."

"I will," I answered, "but knowing so few I shall have to work somewhat in the dark."

"That's so," remarked the Major, "but we must fight for the people."

As we drove up to the hotel, Deacon Johns was the first to greet us.

"Glad to see you, Major," he began. "Was afraid you would be detained in court. Got any plans for the day?"

Before he could reply, several plain looking men approached, and the foremost, a Mr. Blanchard, said:

"Major, we're glad you're here. The temperance men seem to be in the minority and want your help."

"All right, gentlemen," was the cheery answer, "but I'll have to wait till I get the lay of the land."

Will meet you at twelve o'clock sharp," and he hurried away.

Major Wright was no novice in such work, and he proceeded at once to interview the prominent politicians. As he got several together, he asked:

"Now boys, what's your 'slate'?"

"Brackin want's to go to the legislature, Kreits would like to be sheriff, Young is a capital fellow for register of deeds, Green thinks he could take care of the money, and Ryan would make a fair clerk; that young Olson is being pushed by his friends for clerk of the court, and I would like to see you go to Congress," explained Bill Camp, who was Col. Bray's first lieutenant.

"I see," said the Major with a whistle; "you believe in variety."

"That's the way to win," replied Camp. "Practical politics requires first-class, horse sense. Sentiment is at a discount in a political convention, and the moral law not a very drawing card. We want votes—good votes, bad votes; Irish support, German help; ignorance and intelligence; temperance men and saloonkeepers; and we're going to get them."

"Do you expect temperance men to vote for Brackin—a fellow who made his money by liquor selling and gambling?" asked the Major.

"Oh, yes; we have that all fixed. Deacon Johns says Brackin isn't his choice, but he believes in standing by the party if it *don't* just suit him. Col. Bray says that nine-tenths of the church members and ministers in the city feel the same way. The

fact is, Major, we never had matters figured down nearer to a certainty. That's a strong ticket."

"How do Blanchard and his crowd like it?" he asked.

"They kick like steers, and say they won't support a man on it except you, and they don't believe you'll run; but we don't fear them, as only a few are so cranky," replied Camp.

"Only a few temperance men, you mean?" queried the Major with a sneer.

"Yes, only a few temperance men," admitted Camp.

"But the Irish, the Germans, the Scandinavians, the whiskey-men, and all sensible, practical fellows are just as cranky, aren't they? They kick harder than Blanchard and his crowd, don't they, if they're not given what they want?" persisted the Major.

"Oh, yes, but of course we expect that. That's why we've made that 'slate'. We've got to humor such decided fellows, especially when the crowd back of them are equally firm," said the oily man.

The Major sat back for a few moments; then rising, said: "I'll see you again," and hurried away.

As I met him he explained matters, closing with an inquiry as to the farmers.

"Farmers?" I queried; "they're a minus quantity. Haven't seen a genuine specimen here. There's Briggs, the money loaner, who has half a dozen farms he has taken on mortgages. Alderman Brown, who runs "The Broncho," has several for which he traded drink. Link, the cut-throat collector, is another of the same class; while, of course, Col. Bray has a score of his victims' homes. I don't find any others except Blanchard and his friends."

The Major thrust his hands into his pockets and looked puzzled; then, with an amused smile, exclaimed:

"By Jocks, Joseph, I guess this is a convention of the classes without the masses! Every fellow has an ax to grind. What shall we do?"

"I don't see as we can do much but 'kick'," I answered.

"That's about it I guess. Come on and we *will*," he said, starting.

A few moments later we were in a room with the saloon opposers. The Major began by saying:

"Well, brother Blanchard, there is only one thing that I see for you to do; make your demands, and if you don't get them, kick, and kick high."

"That's about our opinion," said the doughty farmer.

"Will Deacon Johns, Rev. Squeers, Elder Meers or our good steward, Bone, stand with you?" asked the Major.

"Couldn't get them to stand for anything. Deacon Johns said he didn't believe in being fanatical, and Rev. Squeers said he couldn't endure political bigotry any more than religious bigotry; that cranks were his special abhorrence and made him tired. Mr Bone cut the matter short by saying he didn't believe in taking temperance into politics; and Elder Meers wasn't ready to 'throw his vote away', or 'turn the country over to its enemies'," explained Blanchard.

"O Religion, Religion; how thy professors belie the manly, the martyr Christ?" exclaimed the Major. Then rising, he continued:

"Gentlemen, there's only one thing to do—make our demands and then fight vigorously. Now what do you want?"

"Only two things," answered Blanchard,— "clean men for office, and suppression of the saloons."

"Good enough," was the reply. "Now who will you name?"

A full ticket was agreed upon and a vigorous resolution drawn, embodying the views of those present; then all adjourned for dinner. The Major met the Camp men and told them what was wanted, adding decidedly:

"I won't accept a place on the ticket if you nominate your full 'slate' or if you refuse to pass an anti-saloon resolution. Our fellows will kick as hard as the others if you refuse our demands. Nominate good men and we'll be with you."

A secret meeting was held before convention time, and the Colonel and his crowd canvassed the situation.

"We've got to nominate *our* slate and sit down hard on that cranky crowd," said the "Boss." "I only consented to support Wright to appease them. If they don't come to time we'll put up another man."

"Let's send for Deacon Johns," said Camp. "He's reasonable."

"Good idea," remarked the Colonel, and soon that individual made his appearance.

"Now Deacon," began the oily-lieutenant, as the former, with his blandest smile, took a seat, "we want your help. A few of the temperance cranks

propose to go back on the whole ticket if we don't nominate their men. To make matters worse, the Major seems ready to support them in their rebellion. Can you tell us how to pound a little sense into their thick skulls? You are the only man we could think of, whom we felt willing to trust. What do you say?"

With another smile at the compliments, the man who "abhorred cranks," began:

"You've asked a difficult question, gentlemen, for bigoted men are hard to deal with. They never mingle any policy with the few ideas that creep into their small heads, but imagine they can reform the world in a day or by a particular method, and are deaf and blind to all practical measures. However, we must do our best to appease them. If they object to Brackin, suppose you name a new man; then draw a resolution that you can support and I'll have it presented."

"Good enough, good enough!" exclaimed Camp. "We'll pass any resolution *you* will draw."

A few minutes later the Deacon read the following:

"Resolved, That this convention sympathizes with all efforts to secure temperance and sobriety, but proposes to respect individual and property rights."

"Just the thing," said Camp, "I knew you'd help us out. We have agreed on Cummings as the new man. The Colonel says he's all right; do you approve the change?"

"I think Blanchard's followers will support him, said the Deacon; "at least I will, for he's a member of our church. I never talked with him on the sub-

ject, but as he has been very quiet, I judge he's no crank."

A half-hour later the convention was called to order and Deacon Johns elected chairman. Everything was "cut and dried" so that no hitches occurred till the nominations began. To the surprise of the Blanchard men, Brackin's name was not mentioned, but Cummings received almost solid support on the informal ballot.

"Mr. Chairman," said Elder Meers, before the formal ballot, "I have a resolution to offer"; and he read the one already agreed upon.

Suddenly half a dozen who were not "on the inside" sprang to their feet with a motion to table the resolution. Camp came to the rescue by saying:

"I think, gentlemen, in deference to those who are laboring in the temperance cause, we ought to pass this resolution, and I trust we will yield some of our own preferences."

"I want to second the words of Mr. Camp," said the chairman, rising. "I feel that those of us who are temperance men have a right to this slight consideration."

The Blanchard men were nonplused. What did this new move mean? Before they could decide, the vote was taken and almost unanimously carried. Then a motion was quickly adopted that all further resolutions be referred to the committee on resolutions, without reading. The friends of political supremacy and personal liberty breathed freer, while the men of honest purpose were startled at the "gag."

By this time the fearless Major was on his feet. As he looked around, no one could mistake the flash of his eye and heightened color. With a shake of that "significant finger" at the presiding officer he began.

"Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the convention. The most damnable trade on earth is a bargain between Christian Judases and Hell's minions. Such, I believe, is that resolution, and such are the men who concocted the scheme of passing it. Under the sanctimonious guise of temperance, it carries a knife ready to stab to death the cause of sobriety and righteousness."

Shouts of "Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman;" "sit down there, you fool;" and "shut up, you cold water blatherskite," drowned all further words, while the chairman pounded vigorously for order.

CHAPTER XX.

WE PART COMPANY TO-DAY.

The man who had stirred up such a tempest, stood erect and calm, while the chairman beat down the uproar with his gavel. The glance of the Major's eye, the slight lines of scorn upon his face, and his well-known reputation for undaunted courage, won the day; and all saw that "the quickest way was to give him his say." As the confusion ceased, he continued:

"Gentlemen, I have the floor and propose to keep it, no matter how loud Rum howls. I admit that he expects to rule the roost, if given any place, but while I am present I propose to have my say. What's the matter here to-day? Why is such a senseless resolution passed? Why is there an uproar when I attack that resolution, and why was the gag adopted?

"There is only one answer—one reason that can be given—an unholy fellowship of light and darkness. There sits as your chairman, a deacon of his church, and here sits the boss saloon-keeper of his city. The chairman prays on Sunday for the redemption of men, while the saloon-keeper works seven days to rob, ruin and damn them. The latter does more harm in one day than can be counteracted by the prayers of a regiment of Christians. There sits Rev. Squeers, a quiet, orderly minister, and here sits a keeper of a blacker hell than Squeers ever dreamed of, with all of his fire and brimstone thrown in. Preachers,

deacons, saloon-men and dive-keepers join hands for a common purpose. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! 'Brethren'! *Think of it.* Is it possible that men, so far apart in the declared purpose of their lives, can be political brethren? Can the children of light have any fellowship with the children of darkness? *Can they?* Yes, it is possible; and Hell laughs and Heaven weeps over that possibility. Such fellowship can only exist when those who have vowed to follow the banner of the cross, consent to lower it and run up a flag of truce. Gentlemen, you who have voted for that resolution to-day, *may* be able to quiet conscience; but a man like me, with a burning appetite for the liquid fire whose agents seek to drown my voice and control this convention, cannot and will not be silenced.

"If you ministers, deacons, church-members and patriots will join with us, we'll nominate men loyal to the truth and principle first, and party second. If not, you cannot have our support. We cannot be bought, neither will we remain in a party which contains an element that will, when opportunity offers, sell us out. Saloon-men and dive-keepers want nothing that we want, and *we will have nothing that they want.* Mr. Chairman, Christian voters, can we not induce you to stand firm with us, even though we may not elect our men? I beseech you, be true to principle and suffering humanity. Be patriots rather than politicians; be Christians rather than partisans."

As the Major ceased, a dozen were on their feet,

shouting for recognition. Mr. Camp, however, "got the floor" and, with oily words sought to quell the rising storm, being cheered, as he progressed, by all except the Major's company of 'fanatics'. Surely but with anxious faces, the latter saw that the love of party and the soft words of a dishonest, impure demagogue, would win the day. He closed by saying:

"If Major Wright and his over-zealous friends prefer to throw their votes away, we will have to let them; but republicanism can never succeed with such fanaticism."

"Neither will true republicanism or true democracy ever win with the help of bad men!" exclaimed the Major, as a parting shot. "They'll always sell out when the time comes. We will not trust them."

At the close of his remarks, Camp moved that all further discussion cease, and that they proceed to ballot for nominations. The Major moved as a substitute, that they reconsider the vote by which the resolution was adopted. The substitute was quickly voted down and Camp's motion prevailed.

One after another of the "slate" was presented, and promptly the Major or his friends, named some good man for the office. Five Christian men, led by the non-professing Major, supported the "good men," while twenty-five church members, seven non-professors, six saloon-men, and ten sympathizers or henchmen, supported the "ring." At last all of the "slate" were nominated, while the stalwart half dozen had named men of ability and conviction.

When the last vote was taken, Camp moved that

the ticket be the unanimous choice of the convention, and Rev. Squeers seconded it.

The Major, however, spoiled it all by saying:

"I congratulate you twenty-five church members who have been led so willingly by the nose. When your whisky captors let go, perhaps you will be able to smell the brimstone or hear the devil's clanking hoofs ahead. You may consider the men we have named, as our ticket. We give you due notice that there'll be music and another party in the field, but it will have no use or place for bums or thugs, and expects no help from men who compromise with evil. They make good breastworks for the devil's hosts, but to redeem the world requires stalwarts of the vertebra order. Gentlemen, we part company to-day, and never shall meet as loyal co-workers till you rend and trample the white flag and, raise aloft the banner of man's redemption. Our hearts are sad with the parting, but duty bids us stand firm. Adieu."

Quietly and sadly, the little company arose and walked out, while the surprised onlookers were awed into silence by the moral heroism that led the dauntless six.

When they were gone the very air seemed oppressive, and the convention adjourned. Those who had manipulated its proceedings sought refreshments in the various bar-rooms, where several of the nominees were already setting up the drinks for the "boys;" while the men who had sold their free, Christian birthright for less than a mess of pottage, silently drove away, dissatisfied and uncomfortable.

The dauntless six held a short consultation, and then, with loyalty to principle as their watchword, and a promise to stand shoulder to shoulder in a political campaign, separated.

As we drove homeward, I was gloomy and nervous. The appetite for drink tugged at every fiber of my body, impelling the weakened muscle and will to yield; but my earnest companion drove me to my foster home, saying:

"That bundle of sunshine will do you good. She's a prize that ought to nerve any man to resist evil, Joseph."

"I know it," I answered as we came in sight of the towering elms before the house, "but no man with my appetite ought to be trusted with such a prize."

Before more could be said, we caught sight of the queenly girl among the flowers on the vine-embowered porch, and as she recognized us, she hastened down the walk with a greeting worthy a king.

"Miss Wightman," said the Major, "Joseph is a little low spirited to-night because he didn't get any office. I will turn him over to you. Make him diagnose his disease, and then prescribe a remedy. Good night."

"What a fine fellow he is when he can let drink alone," said Alice, following him with an admiring gaze. Then turning to me she said:

"Come and rest yourself in the hammock; when you feel better I'll get a lunch."

As I stretched at full length on the yielding cords, there stole over me an unusual sense of repose, and

confidence in the light hearted girl at my side. Placing her hand on the hammock she pushed it gently, while inquiring as to all that had occurred during the day.

Soothed by the easy swing and charming company, I went over the day's doings, and unconsciously disclosed my own sentiments. The harmony of feeling and mutual confidence increased, till I was suddenly seized with a desire to tell her my own condition. As though divining my thoughts, she said curiously:

"Now tell me about yourself, Joseph; what troubles you?"

"I have a wild appetite that is clamoring for drink, Alice," I answered.

"Oh, Joseph Strong!" she exclaimed with a cry of pain. "*What do you mean?*"

"I mean," I answered, "that I am only a giant in frame. A serpent in my being has broken the golden chain of manhood and forged a slave's fetters, and with his scorpion whip, is scourging me to-night. Do you wonder that I am despondent?"

"No, Joseph, but I can't believe it," she replied with a voice of tears, while her face was turned away.

Then it was that I told my life's story; and, as the lights and shadows, the successes and failures, were revealed, the day faded into twilight, and my anxious listener became silent.

At last the tale was told, and for sometime the evening hush was unbroken. The girl by my side was taking another step into that higher life that sympathy and suffering opens. The hopes of the

past, the joy of the present, and the anticipations of the future, were warring with the heartless powers of doubt, disappointment and shattered idol-worship. Finally, with a stronger womanhood, born of the higher view, she arose, saying:

"Joseph, there is One who is mighty to save. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with **His** stripes we are healed."

"For the Lion of Judah
Shall break every chain.
And give us the victory
Again and again."

CHAPTER XXI.

A TYPICAL CAMPAIGN.

Alice's words had a strange power over my contending emotions, and like oil upon troubled waters, they brought a calm—a peace—a freedom from the rage of appetite.

"One who is mighty to save!" echoed and re-echoed in my thoughts with such power as to almost make me forget to follow her to the dining room.

As I leaned back in an easy chair which she drew to the table, my heart cried: "Oh, for some one mighty to save! Is there such a power in the unseen Christ?"

Then, like a rushing tempest of darkness and storm, came the blighting suggestion: "He can't save you; if so, why doesn't He blot out the one hundred saloons that make it so difficult for you to resist? If He cared to help you, why should his disciples vote to forge chains so strong as to bind two million men, and so heavy as to sink one hundred thousand into a drunkard's oblivion every year? If the Lion of Judah can't save his own followers from such complicity, how can He save a poor drinker—a victim of their political action? It's all bosh, *bosh*."

These thoughts ran through my mind as I sat waiting for the "ministering angel" to bring the lunch. As she seated herself and began turning the fragrant drink from a dainty teapot, I said abruptly:

"Do you think those words are true, Alice, when

so many who claim to have been saved by that 'mighty one,' sanction a traffic that ruins, every year, more than the whole church converts? My bitter heart says it is all a humbug."

Looking at me intently, for a moment, as though deciding whether I really meant it, she answered, with a gleam in her eyes:

"Joseph, I know those words are true. Don't doubt them because Christians are faithless and think they must compromise with evil that good may come. The time is coming when our faces will burn with shame at the bloody part we have had in destroying our brothers; but to-night, Joseph, you need the power of a new heart and a divine helper."

She looked at me with a longing gaze, as though she would have me rescued whether I would or not. I ate in silence, and the hour that might have made me a new man, slipped by unimproved. With almost worship for the Christian girl before me, I finally bade her good-night, only to toss for hours upon my bed, warring with appetite.

The Major called for me the next morning before I awakened, and was shown to my room.

"Come, Joseph," he began, "we're going to have a picnic to-night. Blanchard has a letter, saying a fellow will be here to speak on political temperance. He came in early to tell me, and a runner friend, when he heard the name, said: 'Ah, I know him. He is a red-headed Irishman, but I tell you, he's a 'corker.' If you can get people out, he'll open some blind eyes. He can say more in an hour than any man I ever heard; and you can't find any loop

holes in it, either'. Now, Joseph, we've got to make ready for him. It's just the time for such an address. See; here's an account of our convention. The News tells it as it was, while The Herald lies like blazes;" and he handed me the morning papers.

The latter, in its heading, said:

"A GRAND CONVENTION!

And a Strong Ticket Nominated.—Harmony and Enthusiasm Prevailed.—A Few Kickers Bolt, but the Sensible, Conservative Members of the Party will all Stand Loyal by the Nominees.—Deacon Johns, who was elected Chairman, is Enthusiastic. He says, we are Well rid of the Impracticable Crowd.—Now for a pull together."

The extended account can be imagined from the heading. Without wading through it, I glanced at The News, which said:

"A GOSPEL-SALOON POW-WOW.

Love Feast between Brethren.—Harmony between Bacchus and Christ.—The Lion and Lamb lie down Together.—The Church Gets a Resolution and the Saloons Get the Offices.—The only men of Conviction, Bolt.—Major Wright at the Head of the Opposition.—Deacon Johns Embraces the Tiger.—Music by the Full Band, is Promised, and a Red-headed Irishman at the Court-House To-night."

The very tiger of bitterness was aroused in me by those words, but I said to the waiting Major:

"I'll help all I can. Will be down in an hour."

A busy day followed, and everything possible to

get out a large crowd was done. The train bearing the speaker arrived just in time for the lecture.

We drove to the depot to meet him, and were not a little chagrined on seeing a travel-stained, rough-bearded man, of small stature, alight and inquire for the Court-House. The Major introduced himself and escorted the stranger to the carriage.

"I guess we're sold this time, Joseph," he whispered as we sped away. "I believe that friend of mine has been laughing all day at the clever way in which he played us. I'll get even with him yet."

I hitched the team while the Major, at the lecturer's request, stopped to help him "brush up a little;" then we entered together. The room was packed with a curious throng, among them many party politicians, ministers, church-members and "roughs." I took a seat in the rear, while the Major escorted the speaker to the platform. As the large man and his small orator marched up the isle, a general titter ran over the crowd; but the former, without seeming to notice it, immediately called the meeting to order. Self-composed, the speaker drew a large roll of paper from his satchel, and laid it on the desk just in time for the Major's eye to catch it as he called upon Rev. Bliss to open with prayer. The scowl on the chairman's face told his feelings, and I wondered what he would say. He made short work of it, however, and told no white fibs about his pleasure in being able to introduce, etc.

Undisturbed by the cool opening or the titter of the crowd, the speaker drew their attention with his first words, and for two hours held his audience spell

bound. The lines in the Major's face soon relaxed, and he stepped down in front to get the full benefit of the powerful words that came like burning coals from a well filled furnace. Under the inspiring subject of "The Nation's Hope," he showed the desire of man for progress, and his power by political action in this country; the debasing influences of the saloon, legalized by sovereign voters; and the necessity for a new organization, and the steady growth of the prohibition party—a party of patriotism, sacrifice and conscience. Had he been pleading a case in court, the audience, as sworn jurymen, must, under the undisputed facts and law, have given him an unanimous verdict. He closed with an invitation to all to join the new party. The audience cheered and cheered, but the wily politicians frowned. At the close, the throng pushed their way out, only a few remaining to acknowledge the conviction which his words had awakened. The Major was enthusiastic,—as was Blanchard and his friends,—and remarked that we were not out in the political cold, after all, but evidently had good company.

The speech has since been printed, with others equally strong, I have heard, but I have never seen the speaker.

Pastor Bliss was carried away with the address, and several who had been uncertain as to the remedy to be applied, said they were with the new movement thereafter. A strong though not large club was organized, with the promise of better things for the future.

Alice was delighted at being able to entertain the

speaker, and he gave me some valuable literature which was followed in a few days by more.

"Major," I said the next morning, "I'm going to take the stump in our county and make it warm for the old parties. I was one of the best debaters at college and believe I can say much in this new field."

"Good for you," was the answer. "Just take your time to prepare and we'll make the saloon apologists squirm before the campaign is over."

The Herald, the morning after the lecture, said:

"The war by long-haired men and short-haired women, is begun. Last night saw a motley gathering of cranks and fanatics, completely carried away by a red-headed blatherskite, who took special delight in villifying the grand old party of moral progress and true temperance. Such speeches set the cause back by taking a great, moral question into politics. This howling reformer and his friends would make men temperate by law. He evidently didn't convert many, for only a handful remained to partake of the short love-feast. Rev. Squeers and others of the best church people left before the address was done. Their love for the only real reform party can't be shattered by a rabid tirade for two hours, from an irresponsible stranger."

The News said, editorially:

"The address last evening at the Court House, in favor of a prohibition party, was one of the most candid, logical and brilliant we have ever had. No good cause with such championship can fail to find a place in the people's hearts, despite church conservatism and political ostracism. Whether we agree with a

man or not, we know when he is candid and fair. We bespeak for independent, political discussion a candid hearing, and voters may then see that parties are neither eternal nor infallible. They may also see that the moment they are seized and controlled by bad men, that moment they not only become useless in working out the reforms of the people but instruments of the worst kind of slavery. Whether or not all drinking is wrong, it is certain that the present legalized saloons are an unmitigated curse, that effectually blocks the work of all reforms, particularly of the church."

In the evening, the other political party held its caucuses. Here again the saloons were well represented, with fewer church members than the other party, but enough to give the gatherings an air of respectability. Those having some conscience were silenced by the noisy, rum supporters, who, as might be expected, had their own way.

At the county Convention, a good number of earnest, respectable men from the country were present, but the ring got control in organization, and passed a resolution to prevent debate.

The ticket nominated was similar in its make-up to that of the party of "moral ideas," every man being acceptable to the "brotherhood of destruction."

"Two county tickets, as near alike as the peas in two pods," was the way in which *The News* compared them: while *The Herald* praised its own party ticket by saying, it was the only one that church people could conscientiously support.

Thus the campaign in a typical county of broad and

free America was opened, with Rum on top—first, last and all the time—no matter which of the two old parties should win. The only protest came from those who saw no particular good to be lost by the defeat of either. They were the few independent voters, that party bosses or the machine lash—the curses of our political system—could not intimidate.

In an article, some days later, the News very pertinently asked:

"Where, in this county, are the more than fifty churches, with at least two thousand members? Are they leading or being led? Are they for saving men or party? Are they for electing a principle or a party's slate? Are the sheep and the goats in a common flock or can you tell, next November, who belongs on the right hand and who on the left hand? Verily, the historic church is in a deplorable condition, when such questions can reasonably be asked. Were the archangel to come, would he not say, 'Because ye are neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth'?"

CHAPTER XXII.

A WOMAN'S SPEECH.

The days following the lecture were full of discussion. Whether men had been converted or not, the bold, logical address and the indisputable facts could not be passed unheeded. Politicians may ridicule in dependent action by voters, but, underneath the busy, thoughtless exterior, there is something attractive in truth well told. It may not move them to-day or this year, but sooner or later, the weighty facts that are coupled with the weal or woe of humanity, will bear fruit.

In the stores, on the streets, at social and church gatherings, conversation turned upon the evils of the liquor traffic, and men slowly drew the line between those who wished to see the saloons destroyed and those who were willing they should stay. Unconsciously the former drew closer together and were more earnest, while the latter, by the natural result of apology for one evil, came to look with greater leniency and less abhorrence on all infractions of both the moral and the civil law.

Public meetings became the general order of all parties.

I soon entered upon my work as a campaigner, and was gratified by the way in which my addresses were received. The excitement, the desire to excel, the words of approbation, strengthened me to resist my appetite.

The newspapers of the county ignored us, never mentioning our work, except to disparage it or ridicule the fanaticism that would "make men sober by law."

As I returned from my tours and narrated the interesting events, I found Alice a most attentive listener. So enthusiastic did she become that she organized a ladies' quartet that attended many of my meetings and sang stirring songs. Whether I was becoming a broader man or not, I could see that Alice was daily developing by work and thought for others.

In the library at home, I found a new class of books and papers, showing signs of careful study, and from this new student of political and humanitarian economy, I gathered fresh facts, thoughts and inspiration for my work.

Driving from a distant part of the county, one afternoon, to fill an appointment nearer home, I was delighted to find the quartet there to help me; and teams coming from various directions, promised a crowd. I was tired, but did not realize my complete exhaustion until I found myself too sick to eat; and all remedies failed to restore my gastric muse.

"Alice," I said, as she came in after tea, "you will have to speak for me. I am not able."

She laughed her merry laugh, but I said:

"You needn't be amused, for I mean it. It won't do to disappoint people who have come ten miles."

Sobered, she asked:

"Joseph, do you really think I can do it?"

"Certainly," I replied; "those books and papers

haven't been devoured for nothing. Never mind a speech, give them a talk."

With much magnifying she left me, but a bright glance, as she closed the door, gave assurance that I could depend on her.

I saw the chief workers, and told them to have no fear but give her the evening, and I would, if necessary, wind up the affair with a few remarks.

Just before time for the meeting to begin, Alice came in and anxiously said: "O Joseph! what if I should fail?"

"I'll help you out," I answered; "but you won't fail. When you are through, I'll have to look out for my laurels."

Half an hour later, a boy brought a line from the chairman, that read:

"Don't worry: she's a host. The audience is spell bound and captivated."

I was improving, and at nine o'clock concluded to walk up to the hall. Slipping into the crowded room, unobserved, I took a seat near the door. The tall, graceful figure of Alice Wightman, as she moved slightly to the platform, was the centre of all eyes. Her hat was laid aside, and two large lamps, near by, disclosed the heightened color on cheek and brow, as she feelingly and with no thought of self, crowded facts into easy sentences, that came forth musically but with power. Before I knew it, I forgot that the speaker was the girl Alice, or that woman instead of man was pleading for suffering humanity. She summarized by saying:

"And now, dear friends, why have your sympathies

been stirred by the thoughts and facts here presented? Is there a real, valid reason, or are we unbalanced fanatics? You may return to your homes to-night, and perhaps thoughtlessly go to sleep; you may laugh at the men who defy party bosses, and call them cranks; you may go to the polls next November and support men who are acceptable to the liquor interests,—men who will secure both the saloon and the church votes; you may carry a torch, shout yourself hoarse, and vote for tariff high or tariff low, for hard money or soft money, for this or that issue which professional politicians throw into the political arena to deceive the ten million voters and secure two million offices; but the Almighty hears, and the time is coming when *you* will hear. Why not to-night?

"What are political issues when weighted against human suffering? What is party success, when the wheels of that party are red with the blood of the victims it has crushed in its roll to power and honor?

"Can one child suffer, and the nation not be weaker? Can one home be robbed and the land of the free not tremble? Can wives' hearts be made to bleed and the land never bleed in return for it? Can man go on sinning politically and God require no ransom? If I cannot convince your heads, may I not reach your hearts? I want to close with a story, and when you have heard all that can be said for the tariff and silver, for civil service and party service, then remember it and ask God's help that you may stand for men and principle rather than party; for an issue that seeks to bring joy for sorrow, and freedom for bondage; for a party that will, some day throttle the monster, Rum.

"Said a gentleman who has spent years in our great cities, helping the victims of that monster:

"I was sitting at my breakfast table one Sabbath morning, when I was called to my door by the ring of the bell. There stood a boy about 14 years of age, poorly clad but tidied up as best he could. He was leaning upon crutches, one leg off at the knee. In a voice, trembling with emotion, and tears coursing down his manly cheeks, he said, 'I am Freddy Brown, and I have come to see if you will go to the jail and talk and pray with my father; he is to be hung to-morrow, for the murder of my mother. He was a good man but whiskey did it. I have three little sisters younger than myself, and we live in a back alley in a dark and dingy room. I do my best to support them, by selling papers, blacking boots and doing odd jobs, but we are awfully poor. Will you come and be with us when father's body is brought home? The governor says we may have it after he is hung.' I was deeply moved and made haste to the jail where I found this father. He acknowledged that he must have murdered his wife, but had not the slightest remembrance of the deed. He was crazed by drink, or he never would have committed the crime. He said, 'My wife was a good woman and faithful mother to my little children, and never did I dream that my hand could be guilty of such a crime. The man could face the penalty of the law bravely, but he cried as if his heart would break when he thought of leaving his little children in a destitute and friendless condition, and I read and prayed with him and left him to his fate. The next morning I made my

way to the miserable quarters of these children, and found three little girls, clad in rags, upon a bed of straw in one corner. They were expecting the body of their dead father, and between their cries and sobs, said, 'Papa was good but whiskey did it;' 'Papa was good but whiskey did it.' In a little time two strong officers came bearing the body of the dead father in a rude, pine box. The cries of the children were so heart-rending that the men could not endure it and hastened away, leaving me alone with them. In a moment the manly boy nerved himself and said, 'Come sisters, kiss papa's face, before it is cold.' They gathered about it, smothered it with kisses, and between their sobs cried out, 'Papa was good but whiskey did it;' 'Papa was good but whiskey did it.' I raised my heart to God and said, 'Oh God! did I fight to save a country that would derive a revenue from a traffic that would make one scene like this, possible? In the whole history of this accursed traffic there has not been enough revenue derived to pay for one such scene as this. The wife and mother murdered, the father hung, the children outraged, the home destroyed.' I there promised my God that hereafter I would vote as I shot; that, as a Christian soldier I shot to save my country from the rule of the slave oligarchy, I would now vote to save it from the rule of the rum oligarchy. I there promised that no political party too cowardly to declare for absolute, uncompromising prohibition should ever again have my support or sovereign ballot. There is but

one such, the Prohibition party; and I vote that ticket that I may finish the work at the ballot-box that I began on the field as a soldier. *A system of government that derives its revenue from results such as are seen in this touching picture, must either change its course or die, unless God's law is a lie."*

CHAPTER XXIII.

RUM'S HOLOCAUST.

As the loggers saw that High Joe had finished his quotation, they broke out with vigorous cheers and band-claps.

"Golly, she was a buster!" exclaimed Pat Kinney.

"Ze muses of ze heart, makes ze woman one grand speaker," added the enthusiastic Frenchman.

"That was a fine speech, Joseph," said the Colonel with evident appreciation. "I am more interested than ever. Guess you were not sorry she took your place."

"I was not," continued High Joe, "for I felt she had reached their hearts better than I could." Continuing, he said:

When the crowd saw she had finished, their applause was deafening, and men and women hurried forward to grasp her hand and assure her of their deepened convictions. No greetings I had ever received equaled these demonstrations. With the grace of a queen, she received them, only saying, as I assured her that I was gratified at her success:

"I am glad, Joseph, if I met your expectations."

I drove home with the quartette, arriving about midnight. The first thing that greeted our eyes, was the light of a burning house. When we reached it, the neighbors were carrying the few articles of furniture out, while the firemen made ineffectual attempts to save the building.

"How did it all happen?" we asked of a brawny workmen.

" 'Twas the work of those infernal saloons, again," he answered. "Black came home late, full of whisky, and found his wife sick and the room dark. With fiendish cruelty, he went to the stove, took out a shovelful of coals, and going stealthily to the bed, threw them over her, and then held down the bed-clothes till they were in a blaze and he was compelled to retreat. Blistered and burned, with her clothing in flames, she managed to escape, only to fall outside. literally roasted. She has been carried to the hospital but the doctor says she cannot live. The fire-men pulled him out nearly suffocated, and saved two of the children, but the oldest, who was upstairs, couldn't be reached. Oh, it is awful, it is awful!" and the man turned away with tears in his eyes.

Soon the building fell, and we hurried home.

"Let me change my clothes and then drive me to that suffering woman, Joseph," were Alice's words as she alighted.

I complied and soon we were standing by the sufferer's bedside. With wild cries of pain, she writhed in her misery, her words being audible, only occasionally. We caught at last the words:

"John was a good man when he could let liquor alone. He was drunk and didn't know what he did."

At another time she cried in agony. "I'm dying, I'm dying, the victim of saloons. I didn't want them and John didn't, but men licensed them in spite of us. I can't live long, but when I'm dead, I'll cry to God night and day until He destroys the

cursed traffic or the nation that sanctions it. Tell the churches that I don't want any of their preaching, their songs or their prayers. The sanctimonious words of license voters won't bring any blessing to their victims, even if God would hear them; but he won't."

Then after writhing for half an hour, in her agony beyond the power of medicine to soothe, she broke out anew."

"Oh, I am dying, I'm dying. It is getting dark and cold. I am going to meet my God, robbed of life, happiness and the love of husband and children, by the saloon guillotine in this free land. All hope and faith are destroyed by the bitterness that burns on my blistered lips or racks my scorched body. If there is not a hell for men who deliberately make such things possible, *there ought to be*. Tell them that I die, cursing the godless Moloch worshippers of rum, the craven Christians in a Christless church;" and she threw back her arms, with a piercing cry of pain, and expired.

Scarcely able to control herself, Alice stepped to the silent form and closed the burned eyelids, then moved away, leaving the regular attendants to arrange the simple burial rites.

The morning News published the sad account more fully than I have related it, and closed by saying:

"The misery of the auction-block and whipping-post was, when compared with such suffering, as a breath to a cyclone."

The remains of the burned child were recovered and placed in a cheap coffin with the mother's, and a few

friends followed them to the Potter's Field. No prayer was said, no hymn sung, but the cold clods fell dismally on two more rum-crushed bodies.

Among the parties in this bloody drama, none realized their guilt. The husband was too besotted and ruined to feel the heinousness of his deed. The seller, hiding behind his license and his gold, said, "If I don't sell somebody else will." The men who gave the legal sanction by voting for the legislators who enacted the laws and for the men who granted the license, wrapped their robes of righteousness about them, and thanked God they were not among the depraved classes. In this thoughtless mood the various prayer-meetings gathered at evening, but few references were made to the holocaustal sacrifice, and those threw a coldness over the meeting.

I inquired the next morning who this man Black was, and found that, years before, he had been one of the brightest business men in the city. At that time, Colonel Bray kept a small saloon, near the Herald office which Black owned. Being a genial fellow, he often dropped in to take a social glass with "the boys," and, in time, his appetite became the master. The wily saloon-man pretended to help him by loaning money in small amounts and taking mortgages on the printing outfit. 'Twas the old story of robbery under the guise of friendship. The bills for liquors were added to the loans, and finally the mortgages were foreclosed, leaving the drinker penniless and his family paupers. The wife remonstrated with her husband and with his destroyer, but to no effect. The losses and disgrace preyed upon her till she be

came very bitter. She was a member of the same church with Deacon Johns, and often had plead with him and others to close the saloons. The only consolation she received was the assurance that they could do nothing, and if no-license prevailed, men would sell just the same.

Losing faith in a church that would allow its members to sanction such a criminal traffic, she withdrew, saying, at the close of her request for a letter: "The blood of my ruined husband is already crying to God against His guilty church. How many victims there'll be, remains a dark mystery, but I live in daily expectation of death by violent, rum-crazed hands."

When I had learned the facts, I was not surprised at her dying curses. The paper, then owned by the legal agent of guilty voters and doing the bidding of a guilty party, I came to abhor more than I would a disease-infected garment. If I had been in earnest before, to destroy the creator of such ruin, I then burned with a new zeal.

The buoyant Alice lost her interest in society gatherings and sought to learn more of the needs and sufferings of drink's victims. Happy but subdued, she became a wise and strong adviser in our work, always hopeful though others were discouraged.

The husband, after a trial and conviction, was sent to the penitentiary for a term of years, but the worse than orphaned children found a home at the Wightman's and almost a mother in the girl of consecrated purpose.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PROHIBITION PROHIBITS.

I received an invitation to speak at a village some miles distant, the next Saturday evening and assist in Gospel meetings on Sunday, with a request to "bring the quartette along." We accepted and were greeted by a packed house. For years the town had succeeded in electing men who would not license saloons, but they had been compelled to fight constantly the men of "good moral character,—such as are legalized by other municipalities—who run "blind pigs," "holes-in-the-wall," "speakeasies," etc. The business men were tired of giving and doing, and greeted the political movement for state and national prohibition as the dawn of a brighter day, but the great problem was, how to leave their old parties and not "throw their votes away."

The bugbears that politicians use to scare innocent voters had all been preached and published here as elsewhere, till every time a truth tried to enter a man's heart, or conscience plead for a hearing, a political ghost-dancer or hobgoblin, arose in all of its hideousness. Thus, while wishing for freedom, all had been held political bondmen.

At the close of my address, Alice related the story of the poor, burned woman, and with breathless attention, all listened, deeply moved.

"And now, my friends," she said, "will you continue to support a party that sanctions the ruin, not only of

one, but thousands of such homes, or will you shut your ears to the voices of wily, office-seeking politicians, and fearlessly stand for the salvation of men and the homes of our nation?"

"We'll vote as we pray!" shouted a gray-haired man at the top of his voice.

"Will you?" queried the earnest girl; "how many are ready to burn their old political ships and enlist in the army that is striking for our altars and our fires? I want only calm judgment, stirred by a tender conscience, to influence you, but I do want to know how many have made a choice: will all such stand?"

At once nearly every woman and about a dozen men stood. At the wave of her hand they were seated, when she continued:

"All honor to the tender hearted, true women and the loyal men, who are willing to be counted squarely on the side of humanity; but God pity the men—the sovereign voters—who are willing to enslave their brothers to save their party. Protection of homes outweighs protection of industries. Free men are priceless when compared with free trade. Service for God is far above the mocking civil-service advocated by parties that make merchandise of hearts and homes. To you, fathers, let me say in the words of our prophetic Lowell:

"They make slaves of children's children,
Who make compromise with sin!"

The meeting closed and we were taken to comfortable homes. It seemed as though I had scarcely dropped asleep when I was aroused by the vigorous ringing of

the church bell, and opening my eyes, found it was already daylight. Going to the window, I saw people hurrying along the street. Thinking there was a fire, I dressed and hastened out. Turning a corner, a few blocks away, I was surprised to find a crowd around an old building, in the front door of which stood a desperate looking man flourishing a large knife. Looking over the crowd, I saw Alice and her companions. "What is the matter?" I asked of a man who viewed the strange scene with great complacency.

"You see that wiry-looking little woman near the walk over there?" he asked.

"I do," I answered, "but what of her?"

"She's the wife of a Scotch lime-kiln keeper out about two miles. He had been steady and making money until that fellow in the door began to run a 'speak-easy.' Then Mack took to drink, squandering his money and abusing his wife. This morning he went home about daylight and drove her out doors. Her Scotch grit was up, and seizing the ax, she started for town. She's always a good walker, but the way she marched into the village was a caution. Having more grit than all the men in town, she made up her mind that prohibition could be made to prohibit; and, acting on this decision, went straight for the 'speak-easy.' Kratz had gone up stairs to get a little sleep, but neglected to lock the door. Finding it free she entered, tipped over two barrels, and knocked in the heads. By that time the old tiger was aroused and she 'skipped out.' Hurrying to the church, she rang the bell vigorously, then returned to

tell the cause of the alarm. The story spread like wild-fire.

Armed with knife and revolver, Kratz appeared in his doorway cursing, swearing, and daring any one to meddle with his affairs again. While the people have gathered, the little Scotch woman has nagged him with all kinds of questions, and you can now understand the situation.

"I see," I answered, looking over the crowd that had doubled in five minutes.

Among those at the front, was the tall form of the minister, whose church-bell had called the people to such a strange service. He was a brawny, fearless fellow, known as an uncompromising foe to the liquor-traffic. Several women were pushing their way among the crowd, and strong men moved to the front. Finally the pastor's wife touched me on the arm and, as I bent down, whispered:

"The men are going to hold Kratz while we spill his liquors. Will you prevent any one interfering?"

"I'll be doorkeeper unless I can help otherwise," I answered, and made my way to the minister's side.

Suddenly I saw a man hurry to the back of the building and, an instant later, the swearing keeper turned to meet the enemy in the rear. This was the time for action, and a bootless man sprang up the steps, followed closely by several others including the pastor. Before Kratz knew they were coming, the leader threw his arms around him and others caught his hands. The struggle lasted but a moment. Suddenly a voice called out, "Come on," and the women hurried in, led by Mrs. Mack. "Crash, crash," came

the sounds from within. The crowd surged wildly, some showing fear, while others shouted, laughed, and crowded up to the door. "Crash, crash," went the blows again, and "smash, smash," sounded the breaking bottles.

Presently a man rushed up to me and exclaimed: "What's up? What are they doing in here?"

"Only enforcing the law," I answered. "Guess they don't need any help."

"I'm the village marshal. Let me in. It's my duty to stop this mob," he exclaimed, trying to push by.

"No you don't," I answered. "You've kept still while this man has violated the law, and now you may sit still while others deal out justice to the law-breaker;" and, placing my hand on his shoulder, I forced him to sit down on the steps and await results. The people laughed and cheered, some shouting, "Prohibition don't prohibit"; "Prohibition can't be enforced;" "public sentiment won't support it;" and similar remarks which, I afterwards learned, were the excuses common to the derelict officer.

Soon the spilled liquors rushed through the door and around the Marshal.

At that some one called out with a Scripture quotation: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

Another exclaimed: "The flood compassed me about; all thy billows and thy waves passed over me."

In a stentorian voice some one shouted: "Amer!

Amen!" while the officer moved aside with the liquor dripping from his clothes.

The struggle within, and the crashing of wood and glass continued, when suddenly I saw the enraged liquor-seller get one hand loose. Thrusting it within his coat, he grasped a concealed dagger, and, with a flash, drove it toward one of his captors. A moment later and human gore mingled with the flowing liquors, but not from the intended victim. The minister, with his cool eye, saw the movement, and, as the glittering weapon came toward his companion, he grasped the keen blade. One twist was all the infuriated Kratz could give it before other hands disarmed him, but that turn gashed the heroic palm, nearly severing one finger.

At last the work was done. United manhood and womanhood had vindicated an outraged law and punished a deserving criminal. Before quitting the building, they carefully disarmed the dangerous man and told him that the first overt act on his part would be summarily punished as it deserved.

He followed them to the door, still cursing and threatening. Then it was that the wife of one of his victims found an opportunity to give vent to her feelings. Going as near as she dared, she asked, in the lull between his oaths:

"Mr. Kratz, may we have the barrels for fuel?"

"No, d—n you," he shouted, "I'd rather burn a woman's soul;" and with a spring toward her, he attempted to strike a heavy blow, but I grasped him.

In an instant a dozen men surrounded him, a rope was thrown over his head, and, at a double-quick,

they hurried him to a large tree. Up went a man, and a moment later, the rope, dangling over a large limb, was caught by determined hands and drawn taut; but the tone of the man changed. His oaths gave way to cries for mercy. His white face told the terrible fear that his last moment had come.

"Kratz, be quiet," shouted a stern voice. "Will you promise to get out of here in three hours and never return if we let you go?"

"I will, I will," was his emphatic answer.

"All right, then," said the same voice; "we'll appoint a committee to look after you. If you don't want more rope or water than will be healthful, you will see that your promise is kept. Now move lively. Loosen the rope, boys."

As the noose was removed, the scared man staggered away, his trembling limbs scarcely able to support him, and three sturdy young men followed.

Jumping upon a box, a gray-haired man shouted:

"Gentlemen, fellow-citizens: We want to give notice now to all men who think they can violate the law, ride roughshod over the will of a Christian community, and debauch, rob and ruin boys and men, that the next one who undertakes it will find speedy punishment by hemp or water. We propose to fight for our altars and our fires, and we say now and for all time, BEWARE! We also call upon Jack Murphy, the marshal, to resign."

"I'll do it," shouted Murphy coming forward almost as badly scared as Kratz.

"All right, said the self-appointed chairman; "those

who are in favor of accepting Murphy's resignation will say 'Aye,' "

"Aye, aye!" shouted the crowd almost to a man, while vigorous "amens" followed as echoes.

"Now we want a meeting of the village board to-morrow morning at eight o'clock," continued the chairman, "to elect a man of courage to fill Murphy's place. Don't let any member be absent. Friends, our worship to-day will mean something. Let us repeat the Lord's prayer;" and in vigorous tones he led off, while the people, subdued and with bowed heads, followed.

As the hearty "amens" were uttered, the chairman resumed.

"We will now sing the Doxology, then Brother White will dismiss us with a benediction."

With the same vigor, all joined in singing: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow;" then the stalwart pastor spread out his hands and besought a blessing, with no more blights from alcohol.

CHAPTER XXV.

TARIFF AND PROTECTION.

We reached home the next day toward noon, and found preparations being made for a great political meeting that evening. There were large mills in the city employing many workmen, and arrangements had been perfected to have them, and others who were expected to arrive by special trains, parade the streets. Great posters announced a noted congressman as the orator of the occasion and that he would discuss "*protection and the workman.*"

The largest hall in the city was decorated with mottoes and banners on which were inscribed: "We never forget the workman"; "Vote for protection and good wages"; "The party of progress and protection"; "Tariff makes good homes, contented wives and happy children"; "Good crops, good prices and good government"; "Free trade for the masses means wealth for the classes"; "Protected labor means wealth for all."

Long before dark, the crowds began to arrive, and at seven o'clock, not less than two thousand men were in line, led by bands and banners. Up and down the streets for an hour they marched, cheered, and yelled. When the time arrived, the great hall was packed and hundreds turned away.

For two hours the Honorable Mr. B. told of the grand work of his party; how the country was rent and bankrupt when it took charge of the government;

and how, after the war was successfully fought out, it had brought prosperity and riches—*by the tariff*. He told, over and over, how high wages of workmen were, compared with those of Europe—*all because of the tariff*; described American homes, with pictures, carpets and music,—*all the result of the tariff*; traveled over the farms of the West and told of their good prices and increasing prosperity because of "home markets"—*created by the tariff*. The speaker even traced the growth of education and religion *to the tariff*. Sobriety and intelligence, morality and inventive genius, great natural resources and perfected machinery, were mentioned, only as a *product* of the speaker's party policy of *protection*. The crowds cheered each turn of the political kaleidoscope, till the shifting scenes became tedious. Only one thing stood out clearly to the minds of listeners at the close,—*"tariff," "tariff," "TARIFF," "HIGH-TARIFF."*

The interesting scene, however, was to come. Some of the opposing party, knowing of many destitute families in the city, found one whose mother, tired out at the washtub, had broken down and could work no longer. The father, an industrious workman unable to get employment, had just returned by begging and tramping two hundred miles, to find his family nearly starved. The cruel politicians placed this family in an old wagon, drawn by a span of "rack-bone", hobbling horses, and drove to the front of the hall. There they stood, when the meeting adjourned, the hungry children devouring food that the father gave them from a basket—the remains

of the politicians' supper. A banner over the wagon, read: "The workman's family enjoys the fragments of a *tariff* supper." "Tariff and tears make happy homes and handsome wives." "Workmen's children just dote on the tariff." "Mothers, ask for tariff; nothing like it for starving children."

The yelling crowd grew quiet at the scene. The workmen knew the ragged man who was feeding his starving babes, and the political thunder died away. Suddenly they stole homeward, dropping torches and banners along the walk till it looked as though a cyclone had struck a political headquarters.

"Who brought you here?" asked one of the leaders angrily of the man.

"Don't know, boss," was his answer; "a man drove up and told us if we'd get in he'd take us where we could get plenty to eat, and we came. Wouldn't you if your children's cheeks were as hollow as those?"

"I don't know and don't care," was the answer, with an oath.

The scene had spoken volumes to the men not interested in securing offices, and the reaction the next day was great. At every stop in their work or wherever men gathered in groups, the question was asked in one form or another, "What part have we in the *tariff* or in *free-trade*? We can't tell which is right, and men who are after office are not the most reliable advisers."

Some of the good women of the city had arranged for an address the following evening by that "queen of homes," whose name has become a household word

wherever the English language is spoken. The morning papers announced it, the Herald to criticise "the woman who disgraced her sex by seeking notoriety through public speeches;" the News to speak in the highest terms of the woman who was "arousing the mothers and daughters of the nation to *home protection*, and making the mystic 'W. C. T. U.' a household charm and inspiration."

Alice was busy all day "completing arrangements," and I had the pleasure of aiding in many ways. When the train arrived, we met the speaker, and on the homeward drive, Alice imparted some of the plans for the evening.

"Those are good, very good," were her listener's words as we halted; "I will make my address fit them."

For this meeting there were no marching crowds, no shouting heelers, no flaring torches. Quietly the people gathered till the large hall was packed. Behind the curtain a strange panorama was being planned. At last, as the painted canvass was rolled aloft, a novel scene appeared.

Major Wright, Alice and the speaker were the central figures. Distributed about them were Ben Pitts and his family, the children of Black and of Peter Mackin, while at the right and left were more than a dozen ragged, hungry little ones and their sad-faced mothers. A man whose limbs had been crushed by the cars while he was drunk, occupied a wheel-chair, and near him sat a white-haired woman whose four sons with their father, filled drunkards' ards' graves.

Major Wright opened the meeting, after prayer and song, by saying:

"Friends, we listened to the beauties of *tariff protection* last evening, and at its close, saw the starving family of an industrious workman. To-night we shall hear of home protection and see some of the victims of a terrible, tariff-protected industry;" then he introduced Alice as one who could tell better than he, the story of the broken bodies before them.

Vividly she portrayed the terrible scenes through which this array of victims had passed, and the handkerchiefs in the audience told how the sorrowful tales touched their hearts.

After her brief remarks, she introduced the speaker. I shall not attempt to tell you of the address. For an hour that grand woman compared hearts and dollars, homes and tariff, souls and parties, philanthropists and politicians, duty and politics, till it did not seem possible for any to refuse to join with her in the work she advocated. Her words, commending the new party, brought hope and encouragement to the few who had declared for political prohibition, and made converts. The high-flown oratory of the previous evening became like thin air when the cause of humanity and the nation was weighed against it.

At the close of the address, more than a score of names of women who would join a local union were obtained, and the next forenoon was spent in that work.

Not to be outdone by politicians, the women had secured and hung on the walls, painted banners, some of which read: "The strength of a nation is in

its homes"; "Women have political duties;" "True men are not owned by parties;" "Parties like weeds, soon go to seed;" "Tariff, like the century plant, is a long time blossoming;" "It is worth more to save one boy than a million offices;" "True fathers prize boys above parties;" "Shall Christians abdicate the throne of politics to Bacchus and Gambrinus?"

Other meetings followed in quick succession, till excitement was at a white heat, and politics monopolized thought and conversation.

The various candidates and their friends scoured the county day and night. With few exceptions they visited the saloons, treated everybody or left money with these "political club-houses" to influence or purchase votes. The keepers became the power in politics, on which each candidate felt he must rely for success. Knowing their power they intimated what should be done, who could be influenced, and what it would cost, all the while raking in the dollars and laughing at the fools who wanted office.

Independents and outspoken opponents of the saloons were visited by friends and "influential" men, and the danger that would result from deserting their "old parties" and throwing their votes away, was painted in dark colors. Convictions were stifled, courage turned to fear because of business loss, and the "party whip" sent scores fleeing to the old political castles for safety.

Election day came, and when the votes were counted, rum's friends were ahead. Regardless of political lines, the saloons had elected only those men who had

gotten down the deepest in the mud and spent the most money.

Covered with chagrin and defeat, many looked back on months of debauchery with nothing gained, but money and self-respect lost.

After all the work and sacrifice, our party only received a few hundred votes in the county, and, strange as it may seem, the gain was largest in the country and smallest where churches were the most numerous.

The morning after election, "The Herald" announced in glowing head-lines, the success of its party in the state and nation, and called for a grand rally to celebrate the victory, that evening.

I visited the municipal court and found more than a score of "drunks" with a half dozen arrested for assaults on election day.

None offered any defense, and the court ground them all through in half an hour, imposing costs and fines aggregating over three hundred dollars; about half paid, but the others went to jail for from five to twenty days, for the taxpayers to board. Many of these were men of families and were thus compelled to leave those depending on them to "shift for themselves."

At night the great hall was again packed. Colonel Bray nominated Deacon Johns for chairman, and he was elected amid wild shouts and hand-clapping. On the platform were the Colonel and several other saloon men, who had done valiant service for the party, with a half dozen ministers and the successful candidates.

With hearty congratulations, the chairman opened the meeting, and was followed by the Colonel who told of the arduous work of the campaign, praising the men who had helped achieve the victory.

"The small vote of the cranks" he said with exultation, "will teach them how foolish it is to buck their heads against mountains. I have more respect for a Democrat than for the man who hypocritically seeks to aid our opponents by organizing a party of sore-heads. I predict that they'll never do it again."

As he sat down the crowd cheered, ministers, chairman and saloon men uniting in the enthusiasm.

Thus was brought to its close a great American political conflict. The saloons had dictated nominations, determined elections, and were now prepared to demand implicit obedience and faithful service from their servants.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE WORK OF A PLOTTER.

Immediately the faithful service began. For twelve years the administrations, respecting the wish of the people, had retained one man as postmaster. No sooner was the election over than the Colonel began to plan for a change, and circulated a petition for the appointment of one of his most faithful campaign workers. As soon as the people ascertained what was being done, a counter-petition was circulated and hundreds of names obtained including the best business men throughout the city. Saloon politics, however, won, and in a few months the responsible position of handling the mail was given to a man whose only recommendation was his ability to deliver political goods to the highest bidder.

Of the many offices to be filled, the Colonel succeeded in dictating at least two-thirds of the appointments. There was scolding and adverse criticism from those who prized character in high places, but the value of such services as the "Boss" could render, more than outweighed them all. Put in a few words, rum ruled.

There was agitation for a time, but as the dominant element succeeded, everything dropped back in the usual order, except that the violations of laws restricting the saloon traffic were more flagrant than ever.

None received political recognition unless they had done vigorous work for the party, and yet few seemed to regard it as in any sense extraordinary.

The friends who had been laboring for the upbuilding of a party that would outlaw the saloons, came together for a general conference. After much thought and discussion it was unanimously decided that the close of the campaign should not be the end of their work, but, by the most vigorous organization possible, they would begin the next campaign at once. Committees were appointed to obtain the names of voters, distribute literature and keep the matter constantly before the public. No sooner was this done than telegraphic accounts of it appeared in the newspapers, the Herald expressing surprise that men should be so audacious as to think of carrying on political warfare after such a signal defeat.

In spite of his press of work, the Major enlisted, and became one of the most earnest planners and liberal givers in the county.

Only a few days after the conference, the Colonel met him and stopped for a "brief chat." During the conversation, he said:

"The course you are pursuing, Major, will not only lose you a large share of your business, but will prevent any political advancement. You can hope for nothing from a party that commands so small a vote. Should you return to us, even though you have said and done some very unwise things, they would soon be forgotten, and you would be in line for excellent promotion. While I have, personally, very kind feelings for you, I shall be obliged to use my paper and influence against you, if you continue in your present course.

The Major looked at the Boss until the latter

dropped his eyes. Seeing the effect of his glance upon the characterless politician, he answered:

"Sir, I have no desire for your friendship, knowing, as I do, that it is based wholly upon the consideration, whether I will be your chattel or not; and for your so-called 'influence', I have only contempt. I did not decide upon my present course thoughtlessly, or because of 'political aspirations;' so please inform all of your crowd that I have entered the war with no expectation of lowering my banner. I can neither be bought nor frightened. Good day;" and he walked away.

Mrs. Wright had been steadily recovering till, in the crisp days of early winter, she was often seen driving with her husband and the buoyant Elsie. You would have searched in vain for a happier household, or one that more completely embodied the true ideal of an American home, but the shadow hung over it.

For some time they had been without help in the kitchen, but one morning the Major announced that the vacant place had been filled, and they were to have a number of friends to dinner, desiring me to be one of them. I consented, and found a most enjoyable company.

For dessert an old-fashioned pudding was served, from which escaped a suspicious odor; but knowing the staunch principles of my hostess, I gave it no further thought until I saw the Major rise suddenly, excuse himself and leave the table. I tasted the pudding and then knew his trouble. There was brandy in it and the "old fire" in my being was so aroused

that I could hardly control myself and leave the room civilly.

I found him in the library pacing the floor like a caged animal, his face and form showing how fearful was the struggle.

"Joseph," he exclaimed, "what shall I do? The old appetite is nearly consuming me. Must I fall again? Do you feel it?"

Before I could answer, his wife tapped at the door and entered. She had not tasted the poisoned dish, but thought it strange that we should both leave the table so suddenly. Looking into his face she exclaimed:

"What has happened? Are you sick?"

"Wife, there was brandy in it and I am all on fire. Excuse me to the company, for my only safety is in seclusion. I dare not go on the street to-day," was his excited answer.

Just then Elsie entered the room and Mrs. Wright sent her to ask Pastor Bliss, who was among the guests, to come to the library. He did so, and upon learning the situation, made the necessary excuses, and we were soon alone; but the fires raged on, crying, "drink, drink."

When interrogated, the new girl pleaded ignorance of any harm in the pudding, saying her former mistress always wanted it that way.

"Don't ever do it again," was the quiet rebuke of this good woman, and placing the coffee-pot on the stove, added:

"When this has boiled well, bring it to the library."

Half an hour later, hot coffee was brought and we

drank with eagerness. Scarcely was it down, when the major sprang to his feet, exclaiming:

"For heaven's sake, wife, what does this mean? There is brandy in that coffee. Is that girl the tool of a plotter?"

As the fiery alcohol reached my brain, I began to laugh, and every thought of where I was or what duty called me to do, was swept away by the sudden delirium.

With another laugh I forced the door open and rushed down the street, conscious of only one thing, that I *must* have drink. I thought not of Alice or of the past or future. Reason was a crippled dwarf and appetite a mighty giant.

Where I went I knew not, but the first death-trap received me with open arms, only to furnish more of the same fire-water. I knew nothing of what followed, till I awoke the next morning in a cheap hotel. A man was watching and as he saw I was conscious, said, "Here is some medicine that the doctor left for you." I poured it down only to feel the pleasure that strong drink brings. Heeding little and caring less, I drank on, supplied liberally by the fiend at my side, till the crawling feet of black spiders or the slimy coils of serpents, began to creep over my face and around my neck. I can remember their coming, for their horror was awful. Then I rushed from my room and fled along the street toward the river, chased by the goblins of hell.

Only a wild plunge and a coroner's verdict would have been left to tell the story had I not run against Mr. Wightman. With a powerful grasp, he seized

me and called for help. Wild as I was, I can still see his sad but desperate face as he held me.

I was quickly overpowered and taken home, where Alice met us at the gate. Never did I struggle to be released as when I saw her coming down the walk. For the first time, in spite of tremens, my shame, weakness and disgrace rushed over me, and I raved and struck furiously, determined to escape to the river; but a policeman's club felled me, just as I saw her bury her face in her hands.

Not as wild as myself, the Major remained a prisoner in his library, but neither his wife nor Pastor Bliss dared leave him. When other help arrived, she descended to upbraid the mischief-maker, but found no one. The girl had fled, "bag and baggage," but where, no one ever learned, except that Mrs. Wright received a letter from her, several weeks later, post-marked Chicago, saying she had been bribed to ruin us.

By some fiend in human shape the poisoned arrow had been shot, but by whom, only suspicion whispered.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

I had suffered before, but never had such torture racked every nerve, as during the succeeding days. Believing I would soon be myself, Mr. Wightman employed several strong men to watch with me, compelling me to remain sober, and an unwilling prisoner.

The Herald added fuel to the fire by printing a garbled account of the whole matter, and characterizing the new party as a lot of sore-heads and senseless fanatics, led by men who could keep sober only long enough to get unthinking people crazy or unsettled. Without regard for truth or the feelings of friends, the editor said all he could to blacken us and our cause.

I knew every word would go like a dart to Alice's sensitive heart, and my remorse almost overcame me. Could I have felt that I was growing stronger, I could have borne it; but every day I seemed more wild with the burning thirst for drink. Occasionally I saw her sad face, as I looked from my chamber window, and the lines of sorrow and suffering startled me. Mr. Wightman tried to cheer me, but my only answer was:

"It's no use, Mr. Wightman; I've gone too far already and am powerless with such a consuming fire within.

Thus the days wore on till nearly a week had

passed. With nothing to do I grew despondent and desperate. Whether reading, talking or thinking, I could not shake off that constant cry for drink. It haunted me awake, or asleep, till I begged my captors to give me just a little, but without avail.

At last, only one man was with me, and the window stood open. As the shadows deepened, I repeatedly looked out to see if I could jump and be free. Watching my opportunity, I quietly sprang to the ground; and, lest I should be recaptured, hurried to the depot just in time to jump aboard an outgoing freight. For hours I rode on, battling my appetite at every station. Toward morning I found we had stopped at a large place, and began searching for a hotel. I was soon in a commodious office, out of which opened a bar-room. Before entering, I had promised myself not to drink, but the shining glasses and beer fumes shattered my resolves. Scarcely conscious, I asked for a drink, and drained one, two, three glasses, when the compassionate clerk said: "You'll soon be drunk; wait now till morning;" and he hurried me to bed.

From troubled dreams I awoke, only to drink again all I could get. From my first stop, I drifted on, always finding a saloon open to give me more of the poison. Thus the days wore away. Finally my money was gone, and I tried to work, but was too weak for that. Then I began gambling. I knew I was good at cards at school, but my "luck" at various games was now greater than I had anticipated.

Between drinking and gambling the weeks grew

into months, the "black-valley railroad" carrying me further toward destruction every day. Several times I had touches of the tremens, but managed to brace up enough to get over it, though scarcely ever was my brain sufficiently free from alcohol to allow one thought of Alice and her parents or my own father and mother.

I thought I knew what the evils of saloon life and gambling were, but all I had seen or read was but a faint picture of the blackness I saw around me every day. Robbery, abuse, cunning to tempt those who tried to resist, beating, bruising and murder, all came to be common affairs. My size and decided way was all that saved me in many a fracas.

After going through the slums of Chicago, I made my way to St. Louis. While in a saloon there one night, a woman came in hunting for her husband. Finding him drinking at a gambling table, she implored him to go home. Angered by her presence and entreaties, he grasped a heavy glass and struck her a terrible blow on the forehead. With a cry of pain she fell backward and was dead when we reached her.

The husband was arrested, and a half-dozen of us were called as witnesses. The case went over a month for trial, and as I could give no bail for my appearance, I was locked up.

Here I was given time and compelled to think till remorse rankled deep. In spite of my appetite I was kept sober by law.

At the trial the evidence was overwhelming and the guilty husband was convicted and sentenced to

be hung in a week. No effort was made to stay the stern decree of the law, and the day for execution arrived.

I obtained permission of the sheriff to be present, and shall never forget the scene. As the wretched fellow stood on the trap with the black cap ready to be drawn, he addressed the crowd in faltering tones:

"Friends, I am sober to-day. I did not murder my wife, but whiskey did. I loved her, but drink didn't. I wanted to spend my money for her and my two children, but the saloons were too strong; they robbed me and gave in return a madman's heart. I had to pass more than fifty in going to my work, and have been dragged in many times and kept till my money was all gone. The rich people, politicians, and church voters have, together, placed the saloons on every street, to rob workmen and get a city revenue. *They* are robbing us and ours. The law calls us murderers, and hangs us, but the men who license the saloons are the real murderers. Our blood will cry for vengeance."

Here the black cap was drawn, and an instant later the soul of this victim was ushered out of time into eternity, by the law of the same state that had legalized the rum-seller for a share of his gain.

After my forced abstinence, I succeeded in resisting till returning manhood began to draw me toward friends. Ragged and poor, I suddenly started home and arrived in the night, disguised.

The next day I learned that soon after my depart-

ure, the Major, in spite of friends and his own determination, was driven to the saloons, where no power could induce him to leave till he was drunk. Then followed the old, old story. Drinking till he was brutal, only the presence of friends prevented his venting his fury upon his innocent wife and child. Major Wright was a wreck, and though I believed I could help him, I dared not go where he was nor take his breath for a moment.

Determined to stand till I could present myself to my friends, a sober, strong man, I found work in a machine shop.

The second evening, while sitting near a window and looking out, when two ladies passed and glanced in. I knew one the instant her eyes met mine, and sought to avoid recognition by turning my face; but the electric flash of friendship was too much, and with a prolonged exclamation of, "O—Joseph—Strong!" she stopped, her face expressing surprise and pleasure. A moment later she hastened to the door and made her way directly to me, exclaiming with extended hand:

"Joseph, when did you return?"

I did not take her hand but stood with folded arms as I answered:

"Alice, I am not worthy your recognition. I may be drunk by to-morrow, but am trying to straighten up again. *Then* I meant to see you."

With hand still extended, she answered:

"But I found you to help. *May I?*"

I shall never forget that moment, nor her look, as she uttered those words of encouragement. The

hungry hours and heart aches like torrents breaking through the mountain fastness and bearing all before them, surged uncontrolled. Taking the offered hand, the meanwhile reading all the days of sorrow in her thin, white cheeks, I covered my face with my other hand and for some time, nothing was said; then Alice spoke:

"You're tired and homesick, trying to carry your burdens alone. Father and mother will be rejoiced to see you, and your own parents have come and are mourning your absence. Come with me."

"Not to-day," I answered; "I can't go looking as I do."

"And I can't go unless you do," she replied emphatically.

Strange powers seemed to thrill me at her words and touch, and hope revived, strong and buoyant. Suddenly I said, meeting her deep, earnest eyes:

"I'll go; lead on, gentle, conquering spirit."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE "NEW JERUSALEM-INFERNOS."

"Getting pretty late, isn't it, boys?" said High Joe, leaning forward and looking at his watch. "Guess we'll have the rest out to-morrow. Sunday will be a good time, and I can wind up before night. Hope I am not spinning it too long."

"No, sir, you bet!" exclaimed the impetuous Pat. "Beats all stories I ever heerd. Let her spin all day to-morrow. Don't yees say so, Frenchy?"

"Yes, yes," answered the little Parisian. "Ze story make ze poor, poor log-chopper feel he eze one mean stick—not much goode; but he drinkz no more wine. He eze so glad he hav' heard ze High Joe story."

The words of commendation were strong but few, and the subdued thoughtfulness of the men, as they parted for the night, told how new and deep were the feelings awakened.

"Good-night, Joe," said the Colonel reaching out his hand to the brawny chopper as he started for his bunk; and as he pressed the heavy palm, he added: "Your story will do us all good. I never thought of these things as I see them to-night, and I'm sure the men haven't. Strange what selfish, thoughtless beings we are; but Carson's camp is getting a lesson. Good night."

Refreshed by a healthy sleep such as hard work brings, the men arose, Sabbath morning, later than usual; and, after breakfast was cleared away and the

horses and oxen were well cared for, High Joe continued his story to a room full of eager listeners:

With a tact all her own, Alice slipped me into the house unobserved, leaving me at the door of my old room, with the remark:

"You'll find everything as you left it, Joseph. Father and mother will want to see you soon."

Understanding the delicate hint to improve my looks, I began the work with hope such as I had not known for a year. There *were* some changes in the room. On the wall hung a picture of Alice that I had never seen before, in which she appeared as when I first met her on my arrival at C.

"How she has changed!" I murmured, the vision of a noble woman as she left me a few moments before, contrasting with the beautiful, girlish face before me.

In other parts of the room, hung my parents' pictures. They, too, showed change, in deeper lines of care and sorrow, and whitening locks. My mother's eye had still the searching look that said, almost audibly:

"Joseph, is it all well?"

Opening a writing desk, I found my old diary, in which I had written, more than a year before, these deceitful words:

"To-day closes my first political campaign. I have enjoyed it very much. Not only do I feel stronger than ever, but I believe I have helped others and opened the way to purer political action in the future. I don't think I shall ever be troubled with my old appetite again."

I turned and looked in the mirror. 'Twas not a pleasant picture. Eyes, cheeks and every feature told the sad story of a year of slavery to appetite, and I exclaimed aloud:

"O, destroyer; thou hast conquered again!"

Taking up a pen, I sought to write those words below my former exultation, but my hand trembled so I hesitated. Summoning my will-power, I grasped my pen anew, and, in unsteady lines, recorded my confession. Writing before it the date, I contrasted the two sentences, and with a shudder, muttered:

"Conquered; yes, shamefully conquered! Can I ever write that free, strong hand again?"

My hopes had fallen like the summer breeze before the wintry blizzard. Just then I heard a tap on my door, and as I said "come in," it opened, revealing my queen. Never had she seemed so lovely as there she stood with a questioning look, the crimson rose at her throat contrasting with the whiteness of cheek and brow. As she saw I was unprepared, she exclaimed half playfully:

"You disobedient boy! Why aren't you ready?"

"I will tell you, if you come here," I answered, pointing to my diary.

She walked across the room, and after reading, grasped the book, exclaiming:

"It shan't trouble you any more. I'll take care of it and be up again in a short time. You shall yet write words of victory."

As she passed through the door, she cast back a smile of confidence and hope, but underneath I detected a shower of tears that yet would fall unseen, un-

known to others, as oft they must have fallen to wash that brow, those cheeks so white.

"'Tis all for me," I whispered, as I heard her footsteps on the stairs. "I yet shall crown her life with joy and full fruition, or plant that lovely face and form beneath the drifting snows or summer flowers. O God, who gives her comfort and courage, which shall it be? I fain would live a man, but Rum says 'No, thou art my slave. March on in shame to death.'"

Overcome by these thoughts, I threw myself into an easy chair and closed my eyes; but the trickling tears would not be barred, and silently they chased each other o'er my sunken cheeks. Suddenly I heard a church-bell, and its call to prayers aroused the bitter memories of the past.

"Prayers!" I muttered; "what will they pray for— they who have helped to legalize the death-traps that make me tremble day and night, as I walk their streets; they who may yet consign me to a drunkard's grave, and then toll the funeral requiem for her whose heart they've broken?"

Angry and rebellious at such worshippers, I arose, nerved for desperate exertion, and began making myself presentable.

An hour later I was greeted by Mr. and Mrs. Wightman, but words cannot describe my feeling as I knew they read the story of my year of shame. The words and smile of Alice compelled hope and courage that took from the future much of its darkness and uncertainty, but I was glad when the thoughtful parents left us to ourselves.

No sooner were they gone, than pleasantry gave way to confidence and serious thought. When I had told her how I learned to drink and that it seemed beyond my power now to resist, she read my hopelessness with true womanly intuition, while tears glistened on her long lashes. Her words, however, lifted me out of my despondency and doubt. To my misgivings she said:

"I have a sure remedy, Joseph; it never fails. I told you of it when I knew not how much you needed it. To-night I would sing into your heart, the only song that has been on my lips during your absence:

'For the Lion of Judah
'Shall break every chain,
'And give us the vict'ry,
'Again and again.'

"Can't you let Him break your chains, Joseph? He's able and willing."

I shook my head doubtfully and said:

"I would, but somehow I can't, Alice. I feel like a caged man or a chained slave, not even able to *will* to be free."

I will not stop to tell you of the sweet but solemn hours we spent in communion that evening. It seemed as though that Christian girl could not let me go until I felt the power and peace that I knew made her one of God's ministering angels; but I had strayed too far as a prodigal, to get back without a struggle.

At last we parted; and as I said "Good night," the solemn stillness of the midnight hour told not how weak I was, nor how I hungered for the rest, strength

and peace, that He, of whom she talked so trustfully, could bring.

It was late when I awoke the next morning, but my first consciousness was a sick and dismal feeling, born of the rankling thirst for drink. A good meal and the cheery words of my friends brought hope and courage, and I went out with Mr. Wightman.

I dreaded to meet my parents, but as he offered to show me where they lived, I followed, mustering courage for the supposed ordeal. I found them both changed, and in the tenderness with which they greeted me, quite unlike the father and mother of former days. During the whole forenoon we visited and I learned that my father, just before he heard of my disappearance, had lost much of his property in speculation. This, with the sad news concerning me, broke his health, and he sold out and moved west. Sorrow and the constant wish and prayer for my return had drawn them together as never before, and developed the Christian spirit that had been choked by cares and business while I was a boy.

"Never," I thought, as we talked and lived over the past, "were they so lovable. 'The Lion of Judah' must have broken their chains."

After a hearty dinner I went out, feeling happy in my new found prize—a truly Christian father and mother, that *almost* brought me to the "rock for shelter." I had not gone far, when I caught sight of Major Wright shuffling along the street some distance ahead. Quickening my pace, I was soon at his side, and tapping him on the shoulder, said:

"Hello! Major; where are you going?"

Stopping and looking at me sharply, he exclaimed: "Hello, old boy! this you? By George, Joseph, I thought they'd planted you 'fore this time. Glad to see ye, if yer nose is red. Tryin' to let up a little; hey, Joseph?"

"Yes, I've had a hard fight, Major," I answered, taking his arm. "I don't know how it'll come out, yet, but I hope to win. Aren't you going to try again?"

"No use, Joseph; no use. I'm hell bound, sure's we're trampin' 'long here now. Can't stop, can't stop. They'll soon plant old Wright, and then some young fellow 'll have to go to drinkin' to take my place. Hope you'll stan', Joe, but I guess we're both pretty near salted. This is a h—l of a Christian country, old boy, and the cities sort of New Jerusalem-inferno combinations. Meetin' houses outside and saloons and dives inside. Little prayin' and singin' heavens around the edge, and a regular roarin' old pit of fire and brimstone inside. Oh! I tell ye, somebody's kingdom's comin' pretty fast. Ten churches and one hundred saloons tell whose. My! wouldn't there be a scramble if Gabriel should blow his trumpet suddenly. Wouldn't be more'n a corporal's guard that wouldn't go sneakin' for the rocks and the mountains to fall on 'm. Even a Methodist prayer meetin' would be spoiled by the stampede. Gracious, I'm awful thirsty. Won't you come in and — No, Joseph; I don't want to start you. Go on, and God save you yet for Alice Wightman and a good home;" and he pushed me from him as he started to enter a saloon.

I held him and said, as he struggled to be free:

"No, Major; I must help save you. We can yet be men in spite of the 'Boss' who hopes to see us die drunkards. Come with me and make that wife happy again."

I was not prepared for what followed. Turning on me like a madman, he struck such a blow as to send me staggering, almost unconscious into the gutter. Everything grew dark for a moment, and then my head seemed whirling. Scarcely knowing what I did, I attempted to rise, and felt some one grasp my arms and raise me to a sitting posture. Just conscious enough to open my eyes, I saw a man standing before me with a glass of brandy. Stepping forward, he tried to place it to my lips, but I struck it so forcibly as to dash it upon the stone curbing. Then struggling to my feet, I rushed to the saloon door, hoping to save the Major; but I was too late. The second glass was already drained.

Fearing, however, that I might release his victim, the bartender sprang at the door, and, striking it before I could back out, slammed it so heavily against my head as to nearly crush it against the edge of the other door. With a groan I staggered away; and, as the darkness of a reeling brain caused me to stumble and fall, I felt strong hands grasp me, but knew no more.

CHAPTER XXIX.

NO PRAYIN' DAN'L.

The next I knew, I was lying in the old room at Mr. Wightman's. In a chair near by, sat Alice, whose sober face I had a chance to study for some time before she knew I was conscious.

The telegraphic news from my eyes, however, soon stirred the sympathetic watcher, and she glanced up. On seeing my steady gaze, she stepped forward, exclaiming:

"Joseph, are you awake?"

"I'm something," I answered, smiling, "but I'd like to know how long I've been here. The last thing I remember was the slam of that saloon door. I wonder if the Major is there yet?"

"You haven't been here long," was her answer, drawing her chair nearer. "Tell me about it. Nobody seems to know how it happened."

I explained briefly, and she said, much relieved:

"Then you hadn't been drinking, as the bar-tender claims? He says he had to put you out, and you hit your head on the door in the scuffle."

"I hadn't been in his saloon or drank a drop," I exclaimed, sitting up with a feeling that I'd make it warm for him; but Alice continued:

"Never mind. I'm so glad to know it. I was afraid
——"

Without finishing her sentence, she walked toward

the window, and I knew she was trying to hide tears.

It was nearly a week before I went down town, so badly was my head injured; but I learned that the Major, in the meantime, had been on a steady drunk.

"I'm afraid he's past all help," Mr. Wightman remarked one evening, as he told me what he had seen. "It won't be long before he has the tremens, if he keeps on."

That evening I walked with Alice to the prayer-meeting, and on our return saw the Major shuffling along some distance ahead. Suddenly, when passing a church, he entered, and curiosity and interest caused us to follow. He took a seat well toward the front, and we decided to wait and escort him home.

One of the elders was making a long, tedious prayer in which he tried to tell the good Lord the news from all over His wide universe since their last meeting. Suddenly we were startled by a loud groan, and saw half a dozen heads turn toward the poor inebriate. A few moments later, another groan went rolling over the almost vacant pews. Nothing daunted, however, the determined elder pursued his journey, and in time reached his own land. Here he prayed for its rulers, its many people, its government, national, state and city, its schools and churches, and closed by a word for the drunkard:

"O, God, grant that the men of this nation may be temperate and strong to resist the wine-cup (another groan startled all). Grant that they may stay away from the saloons that lure them in (another groan).

Rescue those that have become drunkards, by breaking their chains (another groan, the Major at the same time half rising in his seat). Help every man to pass the saloon doors, without going in to mar Thine image" ——

Just then then the Major gave an unearthly groan, and leaning over the end of his pew, nature made a desperate effort to relieve him of the high-license beverages he had taken. The elder's prayer closed without any "amen," and with the pastor and several other good brothers, he hastened to the groaner. Several placed strong hands on his shoulders and tried to assist him to his feet, but he seemed in no mood to move. Straightening himself against the front pew and clasping firmly the one in which he sat, he looked up at them and mumbled:

"Sno use g—gen—gen'lemen; it's got'ter come. I'm a—a—awful sick; g—gue—guess I'll die;" and before any one realized it, the battery delivered a broadside. "Bla—med if I th—tho—thought I'd drank so much," he continued, coolly surveying the surprised men who had backed off. Then rising, he started toward the altar. Several made a move to stop him, but he "struck out from the shoulder" so vigorously that they gave him a free right of way. On reaching the rostrum he turned around and looked calmly over the room, steadying himself with the Sunday school superintendent's chair, as he stammered out:

"Cussed sma—small crowd. Cou—could—couldn't st—st—storm the de—dev—devil's picket lines."

Then seeming to grow more sober, he went on seriously:

"I'm an awful sin—sinner, going str—straight to hell through the gro—grog—shops. I ca—can't quit even if my boots ge—get fu—full of snakes. 'Sno use f—for me—me to try, so I thought I'd co—come in an' see if you cou—couldn't pray for me."

Stopping long enough to put on his glasses and survey those present, he continued:

" 'Sno use—'sno use; there's n—no prayin' Dan—Dan'l here. The minister preaches an'—votes for licensin' grog-shops. Elder Briggs do—does too an' goes to hor—horse races, th—eaters, euchre parties and church dan—dances. So does Elder White and—and—and every one of 'em. An' the women do, too, only they ca—ca—can't vote. Oh, my! 'sno use—'sno use;" and putting on his hat, he marched down the further aisle and out without another word.

I met him in the vestibule, but he pushed me away roughly, muttering. "'S—no use—'s—no use."

Shuffling down the steps, he made his way straight to a saloon, a few blocks distant. We followed, leaving about as confused and foolish a-looking company as I ever saw. Some faces were sober, some perplexed, others angry, and all surprised.

Reaching home, sad and serious at the terrible rebuke administered to that group of worshipers by the slave of appetite, Alice went directly to her room. Sitting down, myself, on the broad porch near Mr. Wightman, he remarked:

We thought you and Alice must have got lost coming home."

"No," I answered; "we stopped to see a strange

sight at Immanuel's church; "and then I related all. As I closed, he was silent, and I finally said:

"I'm going to find the Major, if possible. Don't sit up for me."

"All right," he answered, "but take good care of Joseph."

Walking along rapidly, some moments later, I saw a girl enter a saloon: but before I reached it, she was rudely thrust out, crying piteously. I knew her, instantly, and asked:

"What is the matter, Elsie?"

"O, Joseph!" she sobbed, "father is in there and they won't let me go to him. Mamma is sick and wants him. Can't you help me?"

"I can and will," I answered, taking her by the hand. "Come with me."

We entered, and the bar-tender scowled ominously; then as we made our way through, he shouted: "Who are you after?" and started toward us.

"I'll show you in about two minutes," I replied, seizing a heavy billiard cue. "You may put out a helpless child but you can't put me out. Just keep your distance."

He did, and we entered the gambling room, and found a number of men busily playing cards, betting and drinking. Toward the back, with others, sat the Major at a table on which was a server loaded with glasses and several bottles of "Old Taylor."

"Help yourselves, pards, help yourselves," exclaimed an "old soak", filling the glasses. "Not many snakes in that but they're mighty big ones. My, how they strangle a fellow! I've had 'em twice and I

know. Come Major, why don't you drink? Brace up, old boy, for 'we shan't go home till mornin'."

There was a wild look in the Major's eyes as we approached, and he gave no heed to his companion's remarks. At the sound of Elsie's voice he started, and much of his alarmed look passed away.

"Come father, come home," pleaded the sweet voice of his "idol." "Mother is sick and wants you. Won't you come?"

"Yes, my little pet, I'll go," he said vacantly, trying to rise. "Help me up."

The child steadied him to his feet and took his trembling hand in hers. I had heard that never since the day when he came so near murdering his wife and daughter, had he said or done a harsh or unkind thing to the golden-haired child. She could lead him home when no one else could stir him; hence I stepped back, and the shrinking girl guided him out of that purgatory, up the street to his mansion home.

I followed closely and entered a few steps behind.

"Joseph is in the hall," I heard the child whisper to her mother; and the sad-faced woman met me a moment later.

"I'm so glad to see you," she said as I took her thin hand. It was so hot that I looked anxiously into her face, only to see the hectic flush, that told what strides another destroyer was making.

"God bless you in your efforts!" she exclaimed, as I told of my struggle; and hastily excused herself

to go and care for the man who, reduced by legalized robbers from being her sworn protector, was now as helpless as a babe and as vile as a brute.

"How are the mighty fallen, when a sensitive woman is compelled to put to bed such a man!" I exclaimed when alone.

I had scarcely finished my sentence, when I heard a scream from Elsie, and rushed through the dining-room in time to see the dripping form of Mrs. Wright retreat from her threatening husband. Crazed with drink, had seized a pail of cold water and dashed it into her face, completely drenching her. It is impossible to say what more he would have done, had not Elsie grasped and held him firmly. Her magic touch dispelled the fury, and he said, as though greatly relieved:

"There, they've gone; they've gone. Elsie, they're afraid of you. How strange!"

A sister of Mrs. Wright hurried down and assisted her to bed, but not till the fragile woman was shaking with the shock and cold.

I remained, fearful that the madman's fury would be too much even for the faithful child to quell. All night long he raved, and all night long the frail watcher sat by his bedside, holding his hand or entwining her arms around his neck to dispel the strangling goblins.

"Oh," said I, watching the weary eyes and drooping form, "how I wish every man who helps to license the forging of such awful chains was compelled to endure the torture of that innocent girl, one night. The damnable cobwebs of argument and

excuse that he has woven, would be brushed aside forever."

I sent, promptly, for Alice, and through the quiet hours, her noiseless step glided in and out, ministering to the stricken wife.

"It's only a question of time," said Doctor Bronson. "She can't last long. The shock has only fanned the consuming flame that was slowly burning her life out. Poor woman, the altar of Bacchus will soon claim her as another victim."

CHAPTER XXX.

THE SIROCCO'S BLAST.

The Major finally dropped into a troubled sleep, and the loyal watcher, with her childish affection, nestled close to him. I watched them till another day dawned, and then gave place to Mr. Wightman. Toward noon the Major awakened, his mind almost a blank. As he discovered who was there, he asked the cause, and with little regard for his feelings, the merchant told what he had done, charging him with having slain his truest friend. Though steeped in the drink that had burned away his will and conscience, the poor fellow broke down and wept like a child.

Going to her oed-side, he knelt and prayed for forgiveness, declaring before God that if she would live he never would drink again.

"O, Tom!" came the feeble answer, "I fear 'tis too late. I love you and our sweet Elsie, and wanted to live for both, but I'm so weak, so weak, that I can't stay. No, Tom, we can't be together long; but when I'm gone you can be a strong man again and take care of Elsie."

"I will, I will," were his only words as he buried his face in her pillow.

By the help of friends and a desperation bordering on despair, the Major touched no liquor for twenty-four hours, though at times he walked the floor muttering, "I won't, I won't, if it kills me;" but the flame within grew hotter, the awful cry for drink

became a tempest that drowned all other voices, and, in the dusk of evening, the chained slave crept out like an escaping convict. In spite of loving child, dying wife, and his sacred promise, he fled along the highway of this "free land," straight for the nearest legalized trap of death. Then, as he entered and stood trembling before the bloody bar, madness glaring from his eyes, the agent of the sovereign commonwealth turned from a black bottle the very fire of hell's hottest inferno, and handed it to him; and, as he drank glass after glass till the scorching liquid went tingling to his farthest nerve, burning away the last barrier, I can imagine how all the hosts of darkness made merry, while the prince wrote in his black-book in words of fire, "Lost, eternally lost."

The grieving child waited in vain for the coming of the father, while the hectic flush on the mother's cheek burned deeper and faster as the last hope was so cruelly dashed to earth.

At last the end came and the lingering spirit of the loving wife called for her "Tom" of other days. Friends hurried away to bring him, if possible, to the departing one; but the welded bands of drink were too strong. With maudlin oaths and curses, he drove them from him, only to pour down more of the blighting liquid; and to the pleading voice of his child he turned a deaf ear.

An hour passed. The broken fancies of the sufferer once again took shape, and Evangeline Wright clasped to her breast in one last, loving embrace, her once sunny-faced, golden haired Elsie; and as she smoothed

away the curls and caressed the childish form, she plead with those about her to call "Tom."

"Tell him," she cried, as though to die without his presence were impossible, "that I *must* say one last farewell and feel once more the grasp of his hand. I would not fear to go down into the dark waters could I pillow my head on his strong arm. Oh, I must see him, *I must see him!* Kind friends, do find him. I know he would come if he knew I wanted him."

Then the bright eyes wandered, the pleading voice ceased, but the tender embrace of the mother arm relaxed not. Placed on the sweet child's forehead, lovingly, caressingly, the thin hand rested for awhile, and then she spread her hands aloft, with a joyful cry of, "Tom, O Tom!" Suddenly the hands dropped, a shudder stirred her whole frame, a look of horror distorted every feature, and she cried in disgust:

"That hideous thing is *not* Tom; why did you bring him here? Tom was strong and grand."

Then as she felt the sunny head, she turned with one more loving caress; and, with a kiss upon the childish lips, sank back, murmuring gently, while a smile played o'er her thin face:

"My sunny Elsie and brave Tom, good night, — good——by——"

Loving friends closed the parted lips and folded the thin, white hands, for the "silver cord" was loosed and the "golden bowl" was broken. Then they led away the comortless child, robbed of father and mother, home and happiness, by leave and sanction of men who called themselves brave, patriotic and free.

At the funeral these thoughtless men and their wives shed tears, not realizing how much they had to do with the "slaughter of the innocents;" and, followed by one "mourner"—the weeping child—they bore to the grave all that Rum had left of another victim. No indignation was stirred, no thought of self-condemnation troubled the respectable churchgoers, and no word of the preacher pierced the selfish armor of ease and indifference.

While the clods were heaped above the silent coffin, the ruined Major was drowning every thought of wife, child and manhood in the gambling room of the new "Palace," just fitted up richer and more attractive than the old.

Although, on the flood of time, the fragments of another wrecked and blasted home went floating out into eternity, neither the city, the state nor the nation was startled at the ruin, and in the archives of none was the record entered. Before men's eyes, the curtain of oblivion dropped, and few saw across the heavens a blood-red banner on which burned the words, "Destruction, Pestilence and War."

Those were sober days for me. I saw what I might yet do, were a loving woman to give her life into my keeping; and I resolved anew never to drink again.

The wretched Major at last shuffled back into his home. The terrible truth forced itself upon him, and a lingering spark of love was stirred by remorse. Slightly sobered, he arranged still to keep his household running, insisting that Elsie should be with him. As it comforted her somewhat, little remon-

strance was offered by friends, and she became his only tie to a better life.

With his consent I opened the old office and began gathering what I could of his scattered business, at the same time carrying on my law studies. I knew I was a "marked man," and that, if possible, my ruin would yet be compassed.

Winter came and I labored unceasingly, carrying my studies into the small hours of the night. Slowly I came to feel confidence in myself, but was never quite free from the old appetite; Alice regained health and hopefulness, and my parents were happy. At the spring term of Court I passed an examination that was highly commended by all who heard it, and was admitted to practice law.

The evening of my admission was spent with Alice, and our common hopefulness at my prospects, together with her undisguised interest, emboldened me to say what my heart had prompted for months. Boys, I cannot tell my happiness when I realized that the love of so pure and noble a girl was mine; but when I asked her to name the day that should make us one, the rich color fled from her face and, as though almost ready to faint, she whispered: "Don't ask me to-night, Joseph; some other time we'll plan that, but not now;" and her eyes had a sad, far-away look, while her lips quivered as she repeated, "not now."

Recovering her composure, she continued, as she pointed to the Major's picture on the center-table:

"*He* was once strong and brave, and loved *Evangeline*. Oh, Joseph! you know the rest;" and she hid

her face while I felt the hot tears drop on my hand.

With the pain of an arrow entering my side, I grasped the terrible meaning. This noble girl returned a deeper love than I could give, but the awful picture of a broken heart, a blasted life, a mound in the grave-yard, as the fruit of Rum's power, made her pause at the threshold with misgiving.

Recovering myself, I said tenderly:

"You are right, Alice; I cannot blame you. However sad, we must wait till you know I am free. How cruel in me to ask it now!"

For hours we communed, and but for the shadow, our joy would have been almost complete.

"I'll conquer yet and be a free man, my Guardian Angel," I said at parting.

"Come unto me, all ye that weary and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," she whispered; "be strong and of good cheer, my royal knight. Adieu till to-morrow."

CHAPTER XXXI.

WHIPPED TO DEATH.

With bright anticipations for the future, I went out into the still night, walking thoughtfully toward home. Passing along the street in front of the Major's house, I was surprised to see the hall lighted and the front door standing open.

"What can it mean?" I queried, stopping, undecided whether to go on or in.

Impelled by a strange foreboding, I hastened up the walk and entered. In the parlor were chairs overturned, and fragments of a broken lamp on the carpet. I knocked, but no answer; then I rang the bell, but all was quiet. Pushing my way into the library, I found everything in confusion.

A cold chill crept over me as I fancied I saw the work of a madman; and the fear of what he might have done made me tread stealthily. I groped my way into the dining-room and struck a match. Broken dishes were on the table and floor, and destruction reigned everywhere. Finding a small lamp, I lighted it and pursued my search. The kitchen showed little of the ruin, and I returned to the hall.

Up the richly carpeted stairs I tiptoed, fearing every moment some dreadful revelation. At the head I stopped, thinking I heard a sound. Yes, it was a moan, and came from Elsie's room. I tapped on the door, but no answer; then turned the knob and entered. Again I heard the moan, and going to the

oed, saw the childish form stretched upon the white couch, dressed, as though she had just come from below.

"What is the matter, Elsie?" I asked, but no reply. Touching her upon the shoulder, she started and turned toward me, while the large, sad eyes looked frightened. As I glanced at the sweet face, I saw dark, ugly lines that told something of the story to come.

"O Joseph; is it you?" she asked feebly.

"Yes Elsie," I answered; "but what has happened?"

"Sit down and let me tell you," she said, taking hold of my hand.

I sat upon the edge of the bed, and drawing my ear near to her lips, she whispered:

"I fear father has the tremens again. He came home this evening, and when Annie brought in his supper, he threw a cup of hot coffee into her face and knocked some of the dishes to the floor. Annie became so frightened that she ran out and I haven't seen her since. I quieted him, but it didn't last long. He got out of his chair and began breaking the furniture. As he threw one of the chairs it hit me and I cried. When he saw it, he grasped one arm tight and struck me with his cane, saying 'I won't have any babies around here.' I tried to stop him, but he struck me again, and I couldn't. Then he whipped me, and whipped me, and dragged me around the room. When he let go, I fell down in the corner. Pretty soon I came to and he was just breaking things terribly. I crawled out into the hall and tried to go up stairs, but my back pained

me so I sobbed right out on the stairs. Father came in and swore fearfully, and wanted to know why I didn't stop crying. 'I will, father,' I said, as I saw his wild eyes, but he caught hold of me again and beat me till his cane broke. After awhile I crawled upstairs, but he came after me with another cane, and said he'd whip me till I'd stop my crying. I plead with him not to, but he did, till I fell down and thought I was dying. After awhile I came to and crawled in here. O, Joseph! I'll soon see mother. I'm all bruised and broken. I can't stir one arm and there's a terrible pain in my side. Say goodbye to Alice and Mrs. Wightman for me; and say——good——by——to——Father.——Let me kiss——you——for——him."

As I pressed my lips to hers, I felt the cold damp upon them, and a tremor in the frail form.

"Goodby, Elsie dear," I said, while the tears rained from my own eyes; and looking into her face, as I gently laid the white hand down, saw a sweet smile play over her features.

I hastened out and had gone only a block when I met Dr. Bronson. With little explanation, we hurried back and entered the silent room.

The time of moans and suffering was past. Upon the face was a smile, but the eyelids drooped and the pulse was forever still.

"Too late, Joseph, Elsie is with her mother," said the doctor, as his hand felt her wrist. "Whipped to death by the drink scorpion, is my verdict, but a jury will say, 'Major Wright did it.' 'Tis false: he loved her too well."

Leaving the doctor to watch, I went to call Alice and her mother, and then started out to find the maniac. Meeting an officer, I asked if he had seen the Major. "Oh, yes," was his answer. "Two of us 'run him in' an hour ago. He was wild as a loon and strong as an ox. The tremens has him tight this time, and if he gets through, I'll wonder."

I hastened toward the jail, and heard his wild shrieks, a block away. Carelessly they had thrust him into a cell, where he was beating the walls and bars, and making the night hideous.

"We must take him to the hospital," I said to the jailor. Find me two or three good men."

A few moments later, three strong men entered and we opened the cell door. A terrible struggle ensued, but the maniac was finally bound and carried to a waiting carriage. In the hospital he was securely chained on a strong bed, and four men waited and watched. In spite of fetters, however, he rolled and tossed, much of the time requiring our combined strength to keep him in place.

I shall never forget that night, for its horrors and cries of woe—the wails of a lost soul—will ring on as long as I live. Boys, do you believe that the ear of a just God can be deaf to such cries? Do you believe a human soul can go down in such hellish torture, and the great Creator take no note of it, or hunt out the guilty men who made it possible and profitable?

Toward morning the fury increased, the ravings grew wilder, and the coming dissolution was evident on every feature.

"He can't last long," was the physician's remark, as he watched the heaving breast and perspiring forehead.

The strangling scorpions seemed to close tighter around the doomed man, and furiously he tore and fought them, screaming, at times, in an agony of despair, "Take them off; take them off; they are strangling me! O, Joseph; can't *you* help!"

His last hour was a fearful one. In his dying struggle, he tossed us four about as though we were boys. I can't portray the scene; it beggars description; but if I could have had the vast army of men who legalized the institutions that made it impossible for him to resist his appetite, pass by his bedside and hear his awful, dying oaths and cries, it seems to me they would repent in sackcloth and ashes, and arise in their might and free this land and its victims forever from the destroyer. Would they listen to tariff humbuggery, to political clap-trap, to the sophistry of demagogues, with such a picture painted on their visions and such wails of the lost ringing in their ears? I don't believe they would, unless their hearts were deadened by the greed for gold.

Two days later the mansion was thronged with a funeral concourse. Two caskets sat in the richly furnished parlors, where some of the broken furniture could still be seen. Rev. Bliss conducted the services; and, as he told how the innocent child had climbed the stairs, her great, loving heart breaking in sobs that the brutal demon sought to whip out, how she threw herself upon the bed to wait for the angels to carry her to her mother's tender bosom,

and how, at last, the sweet life had gone out, with no earthly hand to hold as she entered the dark waters, tears streamed from every eye and sobs made it difficult for him to be heard.

"This city loses one of its grandest men and heaven a star of glory in Major Wright's awful death," said the brave pastor; "and who is to blame for it? Every man who helped place one hundred open saloons where he could enter them. God is writing an awful record in His judgment-book, and every man who has aided this double murder, nay the many murders that have occurred in this city, will have to meet that record. We make excuses *here*, but *there* we will not dare offer them or plead the success of parties, policies or men in justification. Church membership, honesty in business, or philanthropy in other lines, cannot atone for deeds that bring such sorrow, blight and death. I say, brethren, in all kindness, that the hands of every one who has helped to legalize these saloons, are to-day reeking with the blood of rum's victims. The church of Christ is suffering because men fear to follow where the loving Master leads. I would not be a true pastor, if, in the presence of these slaughtered ones, I failed to utter words of burning truth that should arouse each one to his duty. The past is dark but we can make the future glorious, by redeeming our land from rum's power and making the 'banner of the cross' more powerful than the banner of gold or parties. Man can do this, but never by compromise with his enemies. If, by the death of these, we can be awakened, the sacrifice, though sad,

may not be in vain. Were this the time and place, I would read the 'woes' pronounced in God's word; out the gaping wounds, the broken hearts, the silent forms of father and daughter soon to be laid away, are lessons strong enough for to-day."

Then opening the large Bible, he read that wonderful closing chapter. I listened as never before to the words:

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

"And there shall be no more curse but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him;

"And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads; and there shall be no night there."

The sermon closed and a multitude followed the doubly laden hearse to the cemetery. By the side of the mother's grave was a short one for the golden-haired Elsie; and on the other side, one for the ruined husband. "Dust to dust and ashes to ashes" was again said, and the fruits of man's inhumanity, covered by the rattling clods.

Alice and I lingered, while they filled the larger grave, and the crowd dispersed. As the old sexton came to the small one, he hesitated, while the tears

trickled down his weatherbeaten face. Looking up at Alice, he said: "I couldn't place her far away, for I knowed how the mother loved the bairn. I would like to put her in her arms to rest there durin' all the years to come, Miss Alice, but I couldn't. 'Tis one of the saddest funerals I ever knowed, and I've seen lots. I could count more'n a hundred here, killed by liquor, and the Potter's Field over yonder is full of 'em. Tell you what, Mr. Strong, I'm most afraid to come in here at night for fear I'll hear the lost ones cryin' for vengeance, or some o' the angels like Mrs. Wright and Elsie, weepin' over the graves;" and the old man slowly, and carefully, began his sad work.

I led away the sorrowing Alice, and as we entered the carriage, she wept aloud. I had no words of comfort and could only place my arm around her tenderly, while we left in three graves all that once made such a paradise of the Major's mansion.

"No, not all," Alice whispered, as we neared home, "for the chains of earth are broken, and the grave has lost its victory. 'There shall be no more curse,' 'and there shall be no night there.' Joseph, they are not in the tomb."

CHAPTER XXXII.

RESCUED IN EXILE.

Major Wright's father had been wired, but he did not reach the city until the day after the funeral. 'Twas a heart-rending sight as the old, gray-haired man wept over the sad story of his once noble boy. I went with him to the cemetery, and he sat down by the three graves, a truly broken-hearted man. I had read or heard read, often, that story of the rebellious son of the "sweet singer of Israel," but never had I realized the force of those memorable words: "O Absalom, my son, my son; would God I had died for thee!" till I heard that sorrowing father, with similar words, mourn over his lost boy.

"'Twill kill his mother," said the old gentleman as we left. "Only a few days, and our gray hairs will go down in sorrow, two more added to the mounds in the graveyard."

Before leaving, he gave me full power to settle up the estate, saying:

"I want you to have the house and his books for your kindness, and then use the rest to fight the traffic that destroyed him."

With many misgivings, I took up my legal work; but the bitterness of former days, as I saw more clearly the terrible effects of the saloon, came back with greater force. I found myself neglecting my business, in order to help others plan for public meetings or prosecutions.

"I can't keep the matter from my mind," I said to a friend who remonstrated. "The traffic has burned too deep a scar to be forgotten. I am its sworn enemy."

My business grew rapidly, and by fall I had my hands full. Alice's face brightened with the flowers of summer, and her happiness and welcome smile made me long for the day when she would fill my home with sunshine; but I hesitated about pressing the unanswered question of that memorable night. In spite of growing strength in my profession, the ever present appetite made me doubt my power to resist, and memory of the past darkened the future.

During the fall term of court, Mrs. Wightman, as a surprise for me, planned a large party to which she invited the local and all other attorneys in attendance, together with a host of our friends. The gathering was a most pleasant affair and closed with elaborate refreshments. At the head of the table sat the judge, while I occupied the foot. Delicate blocks of ice cream were served, and as I ate, I detected a strange tingle that slowly spread to my very finger tips, till the awful truth dawned on me that brandy was the cause. With difficulty I retained my place at the table, determined to control myself.

My first impulse was to tell Alice; but, knowing how pained and worried she would be, decided to wait till morning. "Now is the time," the tempter whispered, "to show your strength, defy appetite and be a man."

With new resolves, I said, almost savagely, "I *will* conquer and she shall not know it." Then, as I

bade her a tender good-night, there arose in my heart a cry for strength to withstand the tempter. With the battle raging, I went out, all the while saying, "I *will* resist, I *will* conquer," but all the while doubting my ability.

I passed, with clenched fists, one, two, three, four, five, six saloons, and heard the clink of the glasses, the tap of the billiard balls, the boisterous laugh and jest, and breathed the rum polluted air that streamed through the doors. Suddenly, I saw a bar-keeper alone, turning down the lights. Like a flash, dark thoughts went through my mind with a resistless power, moving me by their strange momentum. How or why, I know not, but the subtle tempter with his wand of death, seemed to make one pass, and I was in his power. Boys, I drank again, long and deep; and, as the stars were waning in the east, I staggered home and found my anxious, ever faithful mother, watching for me.

"O, Joseph!" she cried, as she understood all, "has it come to this again?" and throwing her arms around my neck, wept bitterly.

I was too "full" to be greatly affected by her sorrow and was soon asleep. Toward noon I awakened and realized my mother's grief in the sad face that appeared ten years older than the previous night.

With difficulty I resisted the impulse to hurry to the nearest saloon. As I watched my mother, I thought seriously of the future and realized that there were only a few steps between me and Major Wright. With little confidence in being able to

control my appetite if I ventured forth alone, I explained all to her.

"You must get away from these places of temptation," were her encouraging words, "and be a strong man again."

Picking up the Herald, my eye caught the large head lines: "The Cold Water Crank Goes Home Drunk." "The Devoted Apostle of Prohibition Preparing to Follow His Master, the Dead Major." Then followed an account of my fall and drunken condition when I reached home, told in the most cutting, unsympathetic way.

My first thought was of Alice, and calling my father, requested him to go and see Mr. Wightman. He complied and found him at his store with no knowledge of the terrible report.

"We will go at once to the house," were his prompt words. "They may have seen it."

Mrs. Wightman, busy with her work, had not seen the paper, but Alice had read the full report. As she looked inquiringly at my father, he read her question and said:

"Yes, Alice, it is all true; but the fire was kindled here last evening. Joseph has sent for your father, and we hope he will soon be himself."

Mr. Wightman came, and with his advice, I planned to close my office for a time. My only safety was in getting away. Packing a large satchel with woodmen's clothes, Mr. Wightman drove north with me till I found a safe place in a logging camp. I could not meet Alice, but sent a note in which I explained all and bade her a brief good-bye.

The winter passed pleasantly and I became an expert chopper. I did not drink because there was no opportunity. The hearty food and out-door work gave me a vigor and strength never before known, but there lurked the feeling that I was unsafe wherever the legalized potion of death could be had.

When spring came, I refused a place on the log-drive, as it would take me through the cities where the destroyer waited for the army of toilers.

Mr. Wightman met me at the neareast railway station and I was soon in the old home again. Letters had passed constantly between Alice and myself, and I found her happy at my return. There was, however, a strange, far-away look in her eyes whenever they met mine, and I could but feel that a great fear tortured her.

"Will you open your office again, Joseph?" she asked, when we were alone.

"Would you advise it?" I replied, searching in her truthful eyes her deepest thought.

"Joseph, I know of no safety while you lean on your own will-power. Only the Great Physician can make it possible for you to tread safely amid the destroyer's snares," she answered earnestly.

I was silent for a time, then said:

"I shall return to the woods, Alice, for there I am safe. In your temples of worship is an army, who have so little love for their fellows that they help enthrone on every street and in every hamlet, the blackest destroyer the world ever knew. Having helped to ruin the thoughtless boys of Christian homes, they now prescribe their religion as an anti-

dote. I don't want such religion. I'd rather have the worship of a heathen."

"Don't, Joseph," she said, as my words grew more bitter. "Judge not the loving Christ by His weak children. He's mighty to save. I know it, Joseph, and you will some day;" and she looked at me with radiant eyes.

"Maybe I'll find him, then, in the forest wilds," I answered, while I hungered for her faith and strength.

"I believe you will, my tall knight, and then you'll be my royal knight," she said with a warm press of my hand, as she bade me "good-night."

The few days I remained at home, passed quickly; and I returned to the forest, where I found plenty of work. Slowly the weeks went by, each bringing a word of hope and love from the queen of my heart. They were not simple love-letters, but every word was fragrant with the Christlike faith and hope of the writer. She was sowing seeds that I had every reason to believe were watered by her tears and prayers.

The summer wore away slowly, but the longing in my heart was unsatisfied. I said, day after day, as I breathed the fresh forest winds, "I am no stronger to resist than I was a year ago; what am I gaining here?"

Each Saturday I walked ten miles to the nearest postoffice for my mail, where I made the acquaintance of a Christian family. The children always ran to meet me when they saw the "tall man" coming, and in time they learned my story. Though poor in this

world's possessions, they opened a store-house of riches, that, in spite of my rebellious words in the past, awakened a new hope.

Before wending my way back through the towering pines, one evening, I promised these friends to attend a gospel service to be held by a woman on the morrow, but wondered what *she* could say that would be of value to *me*.

"I can't stand this long," I muttered as I shook the dew from the overhanging brush till I was damp and chilled.

The next morning found me early in the small room that had been fitted with rough boards for seats, waiting for people and speaker. In time, both arrived and the service began. At first I was a mere spectator, then I joined in the gospel hymns. A few songs, a prayer, a chapter from the Bible, and then a half hour's talk from a heart full of love for unsaved men, and the simple service ended. The speaker, taking my hand, thanked me for my assistance in the singing, and asked me to come in the evening.

I knew I had been fed by her simple words, but just how I could not tell. Although the house was full in the evening, the message seemed directed especially to me, and her appeals awakened responses that she read with woman's intuition. At the close she asked if there was not one heart hungering for a new life.

Scarcely knowing what I did, I arose. I shall never forget her earnest "thank God," nor the half hour that followed; but a peace and strength came

that I had never known before, and something whispered: 'You can now defy the power of appetite.'

Before I left, that evening, I wrote a letter to Alice, telling her that the "Lion of Judah," had broken my chains, and I would be home as soon as possible.

A month later, I was greeted by the girl who had waited so long for the "glad news," and it seemed as though she was ten years younger.

To her query as to what I would do, I said: "I am going to work in the woods one more winter, and then I am coming to claim the prize I know is waiting."

"All right, my royal knight, but what then?" she queried.

"Then my work again, my books, my profession, my home so long delayed. I believe now I can withstand the onslaught of the enemy, but I would not dare to touch the poison cup. With the help of Him who has broken my chains, I can walk these streets and not enter the doors of death. Are you willing to trust me now, Alice?" and I placed my arm around the girl to whom I owed so much.

"I'll trust the Master, Joseph," she said, leaning her head against my shoulder and looking up with a smile I had never seen before.

After remaining a short time, I came back to the woods and met you. It's been a pleasant winter for me and I trust it has for you. I don't expect to be with you again, although I enjoy the work; but I shall never forget the boys in the woods nor the men who are waiting to ensnare them.

That is my story boys, and I trust you understand why I have told it so minutely.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

COME TO THE KINGDOM.

"I understand," exclaimed Pat Kinney, "and I don't mane iver to drink agin. But I niver enjoyed a story so much. Yees' a capital fellow, High Joe;" and the impetuous Irishman grasped the broad palm of his entertainer, while his eyes showed respect and honor.

"Ze novelle will teach ze boys one grand lesson," broke in little "Frenchy." "When ze spring comes I shall go down wiz ze boss, so ze zaloons don't got ze money. I want to see ze Queen Alice and ze wedding."

A general laugh followed the remark, showing, as it did, a strong desire to see the full ending of the story.

"All right!" said High Joe, rising,; "we'll see about that, later."

"Boys," exclaimed the Colonel, stepping forward, "we are greatly indebted to High Joe for his excellent, though sad story. I know I have learned a much needed lesson and hereafter I shall try to help all of my men to be sober. I shall also do my best to drive out every man who proposes to sell them drink. We all know why High Joe has told us so minutely his story, and can begin our work by signing a pledge. How many will do it?"

"I will, be jabbers," said Pat, pushing his way

towards the speaker. "You write one out and I'll sign first."

"All right," said the Colonel, drawing a pen and paper from his pockets. "You shan't want for an opportunity;" and after a moment's writing he read it.

Pat wrote his name in ragged characters, and was followed by the others until every name was signed.

"I'll take that to the other camps," remarked the Colonel, folding the sheet and replacing it in his pocket. "Now I want all who are convinced that the saloons are bad and only bad, and are willing to help fight them, to stand up so that High Joe may know how many converts he has made."

At once all arose, when the Colonel said, "Thank you, boys," and led the way for a general hand-shake.

With his keen ear, High Joe had caught words here and there, as he mingled with the boys, till he knew that scarcely one had escaped the blight of the drink-robber. Some, he knew, bore scars as deep as his own, while others were but wrecks of once strong men.

For an hour all enjoyed a general chat, and then the cook called for the room for supper. Soon a steaming meal was spread on the plain boards, and it was High Joe's turn to be surprised. As he looked over the various dishes, he said:

"This is a meal fit for a king; some one else has been furnishing good things, I guess."

"Ze Colonel ez ze one who treats zis time," said "Frenchy."

"Yes," answered the Colonel, "I thought High Joe

would be hungry when he got through. Help yourselves, boys."

* * * * *

Rapidly the winter wore away, High Joe retaining not only his place as "boss," but gaining steadily the regard and confidence of the men. Many bits of personal history were poured into his ear from time to time, enabling him to give valuable counsel and encouragement.

"I never had a crew accomplish so much in one winter," said the Colonel when spring came. I wish I had more of them."

"Yees' have more, if ye had such bosses," said Pat Kinney.

"Guess that's so, Pat," was the answer, "but they can't be picked up every day."

That evening a meeting was held, at which plans for leaving the woods were discussed, and it was agreed that each should receive his pay in High Joe's office, when the time came. All except the "boss" decided to go on the drive, and he left, saying he would get things ready for their reception.

"You see, Frenchy, I'd have to learn to ride a log, if I went, and you'd be laughing at my clumsy ways," said High Joe.

"No, no," was the impulsive answer; "ze High Joe can learn ze trick zo quick as nottings. He would lead ze best, soon."

High Joe laughed and bade the boys good-bye, urging them to stand by their promise. "The thing to do is to help each other," said he, "and you'll all find it much easier."

"We will, we will," was the hearty answer, as he drove away, followed by the benedictions of as brave a lot of fellows as ever swung the ax.

A month later they finished their work and wended their way to the "place of meeting," where they were royally received by the "boss" who had made careful preparations for their care and entertainment. To all of the tempter's advances, they had successfully turned a deaf ear, and declared they never felt so well.

Other preparations had also been in progress in the Wightman home. The tall knight was given a warm welcome on his appearance, and the woodman's garb was replaced by a suit that bespoke business of another kind.

While he spent his time straightening up the old office, arranging books, and preparing for the future, Alice was equally busy. When the day's work was done, the two were seen often to climb the steps of the old Wright home where men were busy painting and papering, and before the month had passed, everything was ready, with no traces of the serpent's curse in sight.

At last the day for which these preparations had been made, arrived. The Wightman home was tastily decorated and a quiet charm pervaded everything.

Quite a circle of friends were invited but the chief place was reserved for the "boys" who consented to be present. 'Twas a proud day for them to know that the "High Joe" of the woods was the same true friend when surrounded by the luxuries of wealth,

and that he counted their friendship such as to invite them to this chief event of his eventful life.

When the hour arrived, the nearly fifty men found places in the cheery rooms. Leading the two cripples by the hand, came Ben Pitts, his face strong and hopeful, while his wife looked years younger. The two children of Peter Mackin were among those whose bright faces added to the pleasure of the occasion. The little girl whose mother was burned was also there, with a circle of friends whose bond was genuine affection and interest, rather than social position or wealth.

High Joe's father and mother with their white locks, moved quietly among the guests, but the lines of sorrow on their faces told the despoiler's work.

Dr. Bronson was one of the cheeriest of the cheery, his smile and voice betokening hearty good will, confidence in others and faith in himself. He had become a quiet but indefatigable worker in the warfare against the saloon traffic, having so much courage that dark days never shut out his hope in coming victory.

Good pastor Bliss and his wife were there, the latter to yield the good cheer of her presence, and the former, as he said, "to see that the new team was harnessed securely."

Mr. and Mrs. Wightman received all with hearty hand-shakes and words of pleasant greeting.

Thus the many friends who had come to have a real interest in those who formed the chief attraction, found themselves warmly welcomed.

The little Frenchman could scarcely control his

impetuosity when the two for whom all were waiting, appeared. High Joe resembled very little the stalwart chopper. Dressed in a plain, black suit, with beard and hair well cut, he looked, as Pat Kinney whispered, "more like a ginerel than a chopper;" while Frenchy exclaimed, "Ze Miss Alice is ze queen ze High Joe pictured—ze beautiful, beautiful womanz."

The ceremony was brief but pleasing, and when the last word was spoken the little Parisian was the first to extend his impulsive hand for congratulations. One after another pressed forward, and the tender arms of childhood—some plump and strong, others crippled and shrunken—clasped lovingly the neck of the queenly girl who bent to receive their caresses, while little lips told their story of affection by a hearty kiss. Many a moist eye said more than words could express, but they were tears of happiness and deep satisfaction rather than of sorrow or regret.

After a sumptuous repast, the large company escorted the happy couple to their new home. An hour was spent most pleasantly, when goodbys were said, and, with many a fervent "God bless you, and give you happines and peace," High Joe and Alice were left alone.

Into this new home we will only take a parting glance. For an hour the two sat talking over the future. Whether it held in store for them joy or sorrow, depended upon the strength of the husband to resist the giant enemy.

"Only the 'Lion of Judah' can bring me off more than conqueror in the coming conflict, Alice," said

he, with his arm around the noble woman whom he would ever protect and love.

"Yes, Joseph," was her answer, as she glanced up into his admiring eyes. "With His loving care and strength I have no misgivings. My royal knight will only be a soldier to follow where He leads."

Like Joseph in his pilgrimage, an altar was erected then and there; and, as the days of real life and warfare slipped into years, the ladder from that altar to the skies has stood firm and strong. Daily, angels come and go, bearing peace and happiness to her who could trust the Master, and keeping the once weak man, a stalwart High Joe, with a keen ax ever ready for all wrongs that oppress his fellows.

THE END





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